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DEATH IN VENICE

Translated from the German of

THOMAS MANN

by KENNETH BURKE

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I

On a spring afternoon of the year 19—, when our continent lay under such threatening weather for whole months, Gustav Aschenbach, or von Aschenbach as his name read officially after his fiftieth birthday, had left his apartment on the Prinzregentenstrasse in Munich and had gone for a long walk. Overwrought by the trying and precarious work of the forenoon—which had demanded a maximum wariness, prudence, penetration, and rigour of the will—the writer had not been able even after the noon meal to break the impetus of the productive mechanism within him, that *motus animi continuus* which constitutes, according to Cicero, the foundation of eloquence; and he had not attained the healing sleep which—what with the increasing exhaustion of his strength—he needed in the middle of each day. So he had gone outdoors soon after tea, in the hopes that air and movement would restore him and prepare him for a profitable evening.

It was the beginning of May, and after cold, damp weeks a false midsummer had set in. The English Gardens, although the foliage was still fresh and

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sparse, were as pungent as in August, and in the parts nearer the city had been full of conveyances and promenaders. At the Aumeister, which he had reached by quieter and quieter paths, Aschenbach had surveyed for a short time the Wirtsgarten with its lively crowds and its border of cabs and carriages. From here, as the sun was sinking, he had started home, outside the park, across the open fields; and since he felt tired and a storm was threatening from the direction of Föhring, he waited at the North Cemetery for the tram which would take him directly back to the city.

It happened that he found no one in the station or its vicinity. There was not a vehicle to be seen, either on the paved Ungererstrasse, with its solitary glistening rails stretching out towards Schwabing, or on the Föhringer Chaussee. Behind the fences of the stone-masons' establishments, where the crosses, memorial tablets, and monuments standing for sale formed a second, uninhabited burial ground, there was no sign of life; and opposite him the Byzantine structure of the Funeral Hall lay silent in the reflection of the departing day, its façade ornamented in luminous colours with Greek crosses and hieratic paintings, above which were displayed inscriptions symmetrically arranged in gold letters, and texts chosen to bear on the life beyond, such as, "They enter into the dwelling of the Lord," or, "The light of eternity shall shine upon them." And for some time, as he stood waiting, he found a grave diversion

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in spelling out the formulas and letting his mind's eye lose itself in their transparent mysticism, when, returning from his reveries, he noticed in the portico, above the two apocalyptic animals guarding the steps, a man whose somewhat unusual appearance gave his thoughts an entirely new direction.

Whether he had just now come out from the inside through the bronze door, or had approached and mounted from the outside unobserved, remained uncertain. 'Aschenbach, without applying himself especially to the matter, was inclined to believe the former. Of medium height, thin, smooth-shaven, and noticeably pug-nosed, the man belonged to the red-haired type and possessed the appropriate fresh milky complexion. Obviously, he was not of Bavarian extraction, since at least the white and straight-brimmed straw hat that covered his head gave his appearance the stamp of a foreigner, of someone who had come from a long distance. To be sure, he was wearing the customary knapsack strapped across his shoulders, and a belted suit of rough yellow wool; his left arm was resting on his thigh, and his grey storm cape was thrown across it. In his right hand he held a cane with an iron ferrule, which he had stuck diagonally into the ground, while, with his feet crossed, he was leaning his hip against the crook. His head was raised so that the Adam's-apple protruded hard and bare on a scrawny neck emerging from a loose sport-shirt. And he was staring sharply off into the distance, with colourless,

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red-lidded eyes between which stood two strong, vertical wrinkles peculiarly suited to his short, turned-up nose. Thus—and perhaps his elevated position helped to give the impression—his bearing had something majestic and commanding about it, something bold, or even savage. For whether he was grimacing because he was blinded by the setting sun, or whether it was a case of a permanent distortion of the physiognomy, his lips seemed too short, they were so completely pulled back from his teeth that these were exposed even to the gums, and stood out white and long.

It is quite possible that Aschenbach, in his half-distracted, half-inquisitive examination of the stranger, had been somewhat inconsiderate, for he suddenly became aware that his look was being answered, and indeed so militantly, so straight in the eye, so plainly with the intention of driving the thing through to the very end and compelling him to capitulate, that he turned away uncomfortably and began walking along by the fences, deciding casually that he would pay no further attention to the man. The next minute he had forgotten him. But perhaps the exotic element in the stranger's appearance had worked on his imagination; or a new physical or spiritual influence of some sort had come into play. He was quite astonished to note a peculiar inner expansion, a kind of roving unrest, a youthful longing after far-off places: a feeling so vivid, so new, or so long dormant and neglected, that, with his

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hands behind his back and his eyes on the ground, he came to a sudden stop, and examined into the nature and purport of this emotion.

It was the desire for travel, nothing more; although, to be sure, it had attacked him violently, and was heightened to a passion, even to the point of an hallucination. His yearnings crystallized; his imagination, still in ferment from his hours of work, actually pictured all the marvels and terrors of a manifold world which it was suddenly struggling to conceive. He saw a landscape, a tropical swamp-land under a heavy, murky sky, damp, luxuriant and enormous, a kind of prehistoric wilderness of islands, bogs, and arms of water, sluggish with mud; he saw, near him and in the distance, the hairy shafts of palms rising out of a rank lecherous thicket, out of places where the plant-life was fat, swollen, and blossoming exorbitantly; he saw strangely misshapen trees lowering their roots into the ground, into stagnant pools with greenish reflections; and here, between floating flowers which were milk-white and large as dishes, birds of a strange nature, high-shouldered, with crooked bills, were standing in the muck, and looking motionlessly to one side; between dense, knotted stalks of bamboo he saw the glint from the eyes of a crouching tiger—and he felt his heart knocking with fear and with puzzling desires. Then the image disappeared; and with a shake of his head Aschenbach resumed his walk along past the fences of the stone-masons' establishments.

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Since the time, at least, when he could command the means to enjoy the advantages of moving about the world as he pleased, he had considered travelling simply as a hygienic precaution which must be complied with now and then despite one's feelings and one's preferences. Too busy with the tasks arranged for him by his interest in his own ego and in the problems of Europe, too burdened with the onus of production, too little prone to diversion, and in no sense an amateur of the varied amusements of the great world, he had been thoroughly satisfied with such knowledge of the earth's surface as anyone can get without moving far out of his own circle; and he had never even been tempted to leave Europe. Especially now that his life was slowly on the decline, and that the artist's fear of not having finished—this uneasiness lest the clock run down before he had done his part and given himself completely—could no longer be waived aside as a mere whim, he had confined his outer existence almost exclusively to the beautiful city which had become his home and to the rough country-house which he had built in the mountains and where he spent the rainy summers.

Further, this thing which had laid hold of him so belatedly, but with such suddenness, was very readily moderated and adjusted by the force of his reason and of a discipline which he had practised since youth. He had intended carrying his life-work forward to a certain point before removing to the country. And the thought of knocking about the world

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for months and neglecting his work during this time, seemed much too lax and contrary to his plans; it really could not be considered seriously. Yet he knew only too well what the reasons were for this unexpected temptation. It was the urge to escape—he admitted to himself—this yearning for the new and the remote, this appetite for freedom, for unburdening, for forgetfulness; it was a pressure away from his work, from the steady drudgery of a coldly passionate service. To be sure, he loved this work and almost loved the enervating battle that was fought daily between a proud tenacious will—so often tested—and this growing weariness which no one was to suspect and which must not betray itself in his productions by any sign of weakness or negligence. But it seemed wise not to draw the bow overtightly, and not to strangle by sheer obstinacy so strongly persistent an appetite. He thought of his work, thought of the place at which yesterday and now again to-day he had been forced to leave off, and which, it seemed, would yield neither to patience and coaxing nor to a definite attack. He examined it again, trying to break through or to circumvent the deadlock, but he gave up with a shudder of repugnance. There was no unusual difficulty here; what balked him were the scruples of aversion, which took the form of a fastidious insatiability. Even as a young man this insatiability had meant to him the very nature, the fullest essence, of talent; and for that reason he had restrained and chilled

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his emotions, since he was aware that they incline to content themselves with a happy approximate, a state of semi-completion. Were these enslaved emotions now taking their vengeance on him, by leaving him in the lurch, by refusing to forward and lubricate his art; and were they bearing off with them every enjoyment, every live interest in form and expression?

Not that he was producing anything bad; his years gave him at least this advantage, that he felt himself at all times in full and easy possession of his craftsmanship. But while the nation honoured him for this, he himself was not content; and it seemed to him that his work lacked the marks of that fiery and fluctuating emotionalism which is an enormous thing in one's favour, and which, while it argues an enjoyment on the part of the author, also constitutes, more than any depth of content, the enjoyment of the amateur. He feared the summer in the country, alone in the little house with the maid who prepared his meals, and the servant who brought them to him. He feared the familiar view of the mountain peaks and the slopes which would stand about him in his boredom and his discontent. Consequently there was need of a break in some new direction. If the summer was to be endurable and productive, he must attempt something out of his usual orbit; he must relax, get a change of air, bring an element of freshness into the blood. To travel, then—that much was settled. Not far, not all the way to the tigers. But

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one night on the sleeper, and a rest of three or four weeks at some pleasant popular resort in the South. . . .

He thought this out while the noise of the electric tram came nearer along the Ungererstrasse; and as he boarded it, he decided to devote the evening to the study of maps and time-tables. On the platform it occurred to him to look around for the man in the straw hat, his companion during that most significant time spent waiting at the station. But his whereabouts remained uncertain, as he was not to be seen either at the place where he was formerly standing, or anywhere else in the vicinity of the station, or on the car itself.

II

The author of that lucid and powerful prose epic built around the life of Frederick of Prussia; the tenacious artist who, after long application, wove rich, varied strands of human destiny together under one single predominating theme in the fictional tapestry known as "Maya"; the creator of that stark tale which is called "The Wretch" and which pointed out for an entire oncoming generation the possibility of some moral certainty beyond pure knowledge; finally, the writer (and this sums up briefly the works of his mature period) of the impassioned treatise on "Art and the Spirit," whose capacity for mustering facts, and, further, whose fluency in their presenta-

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tion, led cautious judges to place this treatise alongside Schiller's conclusions on naïve and sentimental poetry—Gustav Aschenbach, then, was the son of a higher law official, and was born in L——, a leading city in the Province of Silesia. His forbears had been officers, magistrates, government functionaries, men who had led severe, steady lives serving their king, their state. A deeper strain of spirituality had been manifest in them once, in the person of a preacher; the preceding generation had brought a brisker, more sensuous blood into the family through the author's mother, daughter of a Bohemian bandmaster. The traces of foreignness in his features came from her. A marriage of sober painstaking conscientiousness with impulses of a darker, more fiery nature had had an artist as its result, and this particular artist.

Since his whole nature was centred around acquiring a reputation, he showed himself, if not exactly precocious, at least (thanks to the firmness and pithiness of his personality, his accent) ripened and adjusted to the public at an early age. Almost as a schoolboy he had made a name for himself. Within ten years he had learned to face the world through the medium of his writing-table, to discharge the obligations of his fame in a correspondence which (since many claims are pressed on the successful, the trustworthy) had to be brief as well as pleasant and to the point. At forty, wearied by the vicissitudes and the exertion of his own work, he

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had to manage a daily mail which bore the postmarks of countries in all parts of the world.

Equally removed from the banal and the eccentric, his talents were so constituted as to gain both the confidence of the general public and the stable admiration and sympathy of the critical. Thus even as a young man continually devoted to the pursuit of craftsmanship—and that of no ordinary kind—he had never known the careless freedom of youth. When, around thirty-five years of age, he had been taken ill in Vienna, one sharp observer said of him in company: “You see, Aschenbach has always lived like this,” and the speaker contracted the fingers of his left hand into a fist; “never like this,” and he let his open hand droop comfortably from the arm of his chair. That hit the mark; and the heroic, the ethical about it all was that he was not of a strong constitution, and though he was pledged by his nature to these steady efforts, he was not really born to them.

Considerations of ill health had kept him from attending school as a boy, and had compelled him to receive instruction at home. He had grown up alone, without comrades—and he was forced to realize soon enough that he belonged to a race which often lacked, not talent, but that physical substructure which talent relies on for its fullest fruition: a race accustomed to giving its best early, and seldom extending its faculties over the years. But his favourite phrase was “carrying through”; in his novel on Frederick he saw the pure apotheosis of this com-

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mand, which struck him as the essential concept of the virtuous in action and passion. Also, he wished earnestly to grow old, since he had always maintained that the only artistry which can be called truly great, comprehensive—yes, even truly admirable—is that which is permitted to bear fruits characteristic of each stage in human development.

Since he must carry the responsibilities of his talent on frail shoulders, and wanted to go a long way, the primary requirement was discipline—and fortunately discipline was his direct inheritance from his father's side. By forty, fifty, or at an earlier age when others are still slashing about with enthusiasm, and are contentedly putting off to some later date the execution of plans on a large scale, he would start the day early, dashing cold water over his chest and back, and then, with a couple of tall wax candles in silver candlesticks at the head of his manuscript, he would pay out to his art, in two or three eager, scrupulous morning hours, the strength which he had accumulated in sleep. It was pardonable, indeed it was a direct tribute to the effectiveness of his moral scheme, that the uninitiated took his "Maya" world, and the massive epic machinery upon which the life of the hero Frederick was unrolled, as evidence of long breath and sustaining power. While actually they had been built up layer by layer, in small daily allotments, through hundreds and hundreds of single inspirations. And if they were so excellent in both composition and tex-

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ture, it was solely because their creator had held out for years under the strain of one single work, with a steadiness of will and a tenacity comparable to that which conquered his native province; and because, finally, he had turned over his most vital and valuable hours to the problem of minute revision.

In order that a significant work of the mind may exert immediately some broad and deep effect, a secret relationship, or even conformity, must exist between the personal destiny of the author and the common destiny of his contemporaries. People do not know why they raise a work of art to fame. Far from being connoisseurs, they believe that they see in it hundreds of virtues which justify so much interest; but the true reason for their applause is an unconscious sympathy. Aschenbach had once stated quite plainly in some remote place that nearly everything great which comes into being does so in spite of something—in spite of sorrow or suffering, poverty, destitution, physical weakness, depravity, passion, or a thousand other handicaps. But that was not merely an observation; it was a discovery, the formula of his life and reputation, the key to his work. And what wonder, then, that it was also the distinguishing moral trait, the dominating gesture, of his most characteristic figures?

Years before, one shrewd analyst had written of the new hero-type to which this author gave preference, and which kept turning up in variations of one

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sort or another: he called it the conception of "an intellectual and youthful masculinity" which "stands motionless, haughty, ashamed, with jaw set, while swords and spear-points beset the body." That was beautiful and ingenious; and it was exact, although it may have seemed to suggest too much passivity. For to be poised against fatality, to meet adverse conditions gracefully, is more than simple endurance; it is an act of aggression, a positive triumph—and the figure of Sebastian is the most beautiful figure, if not of art as a whole, at least of the art of literature. Looking into this fictional world, one saw: a delicate self-mastery by which any inner deterioration, any biological decay was kept concealed from the eyes of the world; a crude, vicious sensuality capable of fanning its rising passions into pure flame, yes, even of mounting to dominance in the realm of beauty; a pallid weakness which draws from the glowing depths of the soul the strength to bow whole arrogant peoples before the foot of the cross, or before the feet of weakness itself; a charming manner maintained in his cold, strict service to form; a false, precarious mode of living, and the keenly enervating melancholy and artifice of the born deceiver—to observe such trials as this was enough to make one question whether there really was any heroism other than weakness. And, in any case, what heroism could be more in keeping with the times? Gustav Aschenbach was the one poet among the many workers on the verge of exhaustion: the

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over-burdened, the used-up, the clingers-on, in short all those moralists of production who, delicately built and destitute of means, can rely for a time at least on will-power and the shrewd husbandry of their resources to secure the effects of greatness. There are many such: they are the heroes of the period. And they all found themselves in his works; here they were indeed, upheld, intensified, applauded; they were grateful to him, they acclaimed him.

In his time he had been young and raw; and, misled by his age, he had blundered in public. He had stumbled, had exposed himself; both in writing and in talk he had offended against caution and tact. But he had acquired the dignity which, as he insisted, is the innate goad and craving of every great talent; in fact, it could be said that his entire development had been a conscious undeviating progression away from the embarrassments of scepticism and irony, and towards dignity.

The general masses are satisfied by vigour and tangibility of treatment rather than by any close intellectual processes; but youth, with its passion for the absolute, can be arrested only by the problematical. And Aschenbach had been absolute, problematical, as only a youth could be. He had been a slave to the intellect, had played havoc with knowledge, had ground up his seed crops, had divulged secrets, had discredited talent, had betrayed art—yes, while his modellings were entertaining the faithful votaries, filling them with enthusiasm, making their

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lives more keen, this youthful artist was taking the breath away from the generation then in its twenties by his cynicisms on the questionable nature of art, and of artistry itself.

But it seems that nothing blunts the edge of a noble, robust mind more quickly and more thoroughly than the sharp and bitter corrosion of knowledge; and certainly the moody radicalism of the youth, no matter how conscientious, was shallow in comparison with his firm determination as an older man and a master to deny knowledge, to reject it, to pass it with raised head, in so far as it is capable of crippling, discouraging, or degrading to the slightest degree, our will, acts, feelings, or even passions. How else could the famous story of "The Wretch" be understood than as an outburst of repugnance against the disreputable psychologism of the times: embodied in the figure of that soft and stupid half-clown who pilfers a destiny for himself by guiding his wife (from powerlessness, from lasciviousness, from ethical frailty) into the arms of an adolescent, and believes that he may through profundity commit villainess? The verbal pressure with which he here cast out the outcast announced the return from every moral scepticism, from all fellow-feeling with the engulfed: it was the counter-move to the laxity of the sympathetic principle that to understand all is to forgive all—and the thing that was here well begun, even nearly completed, was that "miracle of reborn ingenuousness" which was taken up a little later in

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one of the author's dialogues expressly and not without a certain discreet emphasis. Strange coincidences! Was it as a result of this rebirth, this new dignity and sternness, that his feeling for beauty—a discriminating purity, simplicity, and evenness of attack which henceforth gave his productions such an obvious, even such a deliberate stamp of mastery and classicism—showed an almost excessive strengthening about this time? But ethical resoluteness in the exclusion of science, of emancipatory and restrictive knowledge—does this not in turn signify a simplification, a reduction morally of the world to too limited terms, and thus also a strengthened capacity for the forbidden, the evil, the morally impossible? And does not form have two aspects? Is it not moral and unmoral at once—moral in that it is the result and expression of discipline, but unmoral, and even immoral, in that by nature it contains an indifference to morality, is calculated, in fact, to make morality bend beneath its proud and unencumbered sceptre?

Be that as it may. An evolution is a destiny; and why should his evolution, which had been upheld by the general confidence of a vast public, not run through a different course from one accomplished outside the lustre and the entanglements of fame? Only chronic vagabondage will find it tedious and be inclined to scoff when a great talent outgrows the libertine chrysalis-stage, learns to seize upon and express the dignity of the mind, and superimposes a

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formal etiquette upon a solitude which had been filled with unchastened and rigidly isolated sufferings and struggles and had brought all this to a point of power and honour among men. Further, how much sport, defiance, indulgence there is in the self-formation of a talent! Gradually something official, didactic, crept into Gustav Aschenbach's productions, his style in later life fought shy of any abruptness and boldness, any subtle and unexpected contrasts; he inclined towards the fixed and standardized, the conventionally elegant, the conservative, the formal, the formulated, nearly. And, as is traditionally said of Louis XIV, with the advancing years he came to omit every common word from his vocabulary. At about this time it happened that the educational authorities included selected pages by him in their prescribed school readers. This was deeply sympathetic to his nature, and he did not decline when a German prince who had just mounted the throne raised the author of the "Frederick" to knighthood on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday. After a few years of unrest, a few tentative stopping-places here and there, he soon chose Munich as his permanent home, and lived there in a state of middle-class respectability such as fits in with the life of the mind in certain individual instances. The marriage which, when still young, he had contracted with a girl of an educated family came to an end with her death after a short period of happiness. He was left with a daughter, now married. He had never had a son.

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Gustav von Aschenbach was somewhat below average height, dark, and smooth-shaven. His head seemed a bit too large in comparison with his almost dapper figure. His hair was brushed straight back, thinning out towards the crown, but very full about the temples, and strongly marked with grey; it framed a high, ridged forehead. Gold spectacles with rimless lenses cut into the bridge of his bold, heavy nose. The mouth was big, sometimes drooping, sometimes suddenly pinched and firm. His cheeks were thin and wrinkled, his well-formed chin had a slight cleft. This head, usually bent patiently to one side, seemed to have gone through momentous experiences, and yet it was his art which had produced those effects in his face, effects which are elsewhere the result of hard and agitated living. Behind this brow the brilliant repartee of the dialogue on war between Voltaire and the king had been born; these eyes, peering steadily and wearily from behind their glasses, had seen the bloody inferno of the lazaret in the Seven Years' War. Even as it applies to the individual, art is a heightened mode of existence. It gives deeper pleasures, it consumes more quickly. It carves into its servants' faces the marks of imaginary and spiritual adventures, and though their external activities may be as quiet as a cloister, it produces a lasting voluptuousness, overrefinement, fatigue, and curiosity of the nerves such as can barely result from a life filled with illicit passions and enjoyments.

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III

Various matters of a literary and social nature delayed his departure until about two weeks after that walk in Munich. Finally he gave orders to have his country-house ready for occupancy within a month; and one day between the middle and the end of May he took the night train for Trieste, where he made a stop-over of only twenty-four hours, and embarked the following morning for Pola.

What he was hunting was something foreign and unrelated to himself which would at the same time be quickly within reach; and so he stopped at an island in the Adriatic which had become well known in recent years. It lay not far off the Istrian coast, with beautifully rugged cliffs fronting the open sea, and natives who dressed in variegated tatters and made strange sounds when they spoke. But rain and a heavy atmosphere, a provincial and exclusively Austrian patronage at the hotel, and the lack of that restfully intimate association with the sea which can be gotten only by a soft, sandy beach, irritated him, and prevented him from feeling that he had found the place he was looking for. Something within was disturbing him, and drawing him he was not sure where. He studied sailing dates, he looked about him questioningly, and of a sudden, as a thing both astounding and self-evident, his goal was before him. If you wanted to reach over night the unique, the

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fabulously different, where did you go? But that was plain. What was he doing here? He had lost the trail. He had wanted to go there. He did not delay in giving notice of his mistake in stopping here. In the early morning mist, a week and a half after his arrival on the island, a fast motor-boat was carrying him and his luggage back over the water to the naval port, and he landed there just long enough to cross the gangplank to the damp deck of a ship which was lying under steam ready for the voyage to Venice.

It was an old hulk flying the Italian flag, decrepit, sooty, and mournful. In a cave-like, artificially lighted inside cabin where Aschenbach, immediately upon boarding the ship, was conducted by a dirty hunchbacked sailor, who smirked politely, there was sitting behind a table, his hat cocked over his forehead and a cigarette stump in the corner of his mouth, a man with a goatee, and with the face of an old-style circus director, who was taking down the particulars of the passengers with professional grimaces and distributing the tickets. "To Venice!" he repeated Aschenbach's request, as he extended his arm and plunged his pen into the pasty dregs of a precariously tilted inkwell. "To Venice, first class! At your service, sir." And he wrote a generous scrawl, sprinkled it with blue sand out of a box, let the sand run off into a clay bowl, folded the paper with sallow, bony fingers, and began writing again. "A happily chosen destination!" he chatted on. "Ah, Venice! A splendid city! A city of irresistible at-

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tractiveness for the educated on account of its history as well as its present-day charms." The smooth rapidity of his movements and the empty words accompanying them had something anæsthetic and reassuring about them, much as though he feared lest the traveller might still be vacillating in his decision to go to Venice. He handled the cash briskly, and let the change fall on the spotted table-cover with the skill of a croupier. "A pleasant journey, sir!" he said with a theatrical bow. "Gentlemen, I have the honour of serving you!" he called out immediately after, with his arm upraised, and he acted as if business were in full swing, although no one else was there to require his attention. Aschenbach returned to the deck.

With one arm on the railing, he watched the passengers on board and the idlers who loitered around the dock waiting for the ship to sail. The second-class passengers, men and women, were huddled together on the foredeck, using boxes and bundles as seats. A group of young people made up the travellers on the first deck, clerks from Pola, it seemed, who had gathered in the greatest excitement for an excursion to Italy. They made a considerable fuss about themselves and their enterprise, chattered, laughed, enjoyed their own antics self-contentedly, and, leaning over the hand-rails, shouted flippantly and mockingly at their comrades who, with portfolios under their arms, were going up and down the water-front on business and kept threatening the pic-

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nickers with their canes. One, in a bright yellow summer suit of ultra-fashionable cut, with a red necktie, and a rakishly tilted Panama, surpassed all the others in his crowning good humour. But as soon as Aschenbach looked at him a bit more carefully, he discovered with a kind of horror that the youth was a cheat. He was old, that was unquestionable. There were wrinkles around his eyes and mouth. The faint crimson of the cheeks was paint, the hair under his brilliantly decorated straw hat was a wig; his neck was hollow and stringy, his turned-up moustache and the imperial on his chin were dyed; the full set of yellow teeth which he displayed when he laughed, a cheap artificial plate; and his hands, with signet rings on both index fingers, were those of an old man. Fascinated with loathing, Aschenbach watched him in his intercourse with his friends. Did they not know, did they not observe that he was old, that he was not entitled to wear their bright, foppish clothing, that he was not entitled to play at being one of them? Unquestioningly, and as quite the usual thing, it seemed, they allowed him among them, treating him as one of their own kind and returning his jovial nudges in the ribs without repugnance. How could that be? Aschenbach laid his hand on his forehead and closed his eyes; they were hot, since he had had too little sleep. He felt as though everything were not quite the same as usual, as though some dream-like estrangement, some peculiar distortion of the world, were beginning to

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take possession of him, and perhaps this could be stopped if he hid his face for a time and then looked around him again. Yet at this moment he felt as though he were swimming; and, looking up with an unreasoned fear, he discovered that the heavy, lugubrious body of the ship was separating slowly from the walled bank. Inch by inch, with the driving and reversing of the engine, the strip of dirty glistening water widened between the dock and the side of the ship; and, after cumbersome manœuvring, the steamer finally turned its nose towards the open sea. Aschenbach crossed to the starboard side, where the hunchback had set up a deck-chair for him, and a steward in a spotted dress-coat asked after his wants.

The sky was grey, the wind damp. Harbour and islands had been left behind, and soon all land was lost in the haze. Flakes of coal dust, bloated with moisture, fell over the washed deck, which would not dry. After the first hour an awning was spread, since it had begun to rain.

Bundled up in his coat, a book in his lap, the traveller rested, and the hours passed unnoticed. It stopped raining; the canvas awning was removed. The horizon was unbroken. The sea, empty, like an enormous disk, lay stretched under the curve of the sky. But in empty inarticulate space our senses lose also the dimensions of time, and we slip into the incommensurate. As he rested, strange shadowy figures, the old dandy, the goatee from the inside

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cabin, passed through his mind, with vague gestures, muddled dream-words—and he was asleep.

About noon he was called to a meal down in the corridor-like dining-hall into which the doors opened from the sleeping-cabins; he ate near the head of a long table, at the other end of which the clerks, including the old man, had been drinking with the boisterous captain since ten o'clock. The food was poor, and he finished rapidly. He felt driven outside to look at the sky, to see if it showed signs of being brighter above Venice.

He had kept thinking that this had to occur, since the city had always received him in full blaze. But sky and sea remained dreary and leaden, at times a misty rain fell, and here he was reaching by water a different Venice than he had ever found when approaching on land. He stood by the forestays, looking in the distance, waiting for land. He thought of the heavy-hearted, enthusiastic poet for whom the domes and bell towers of his dreams had once risen out of these waters; he relived in silence some of that reverence, happiness, and sorrow which had been turned then into cautious song; and easily susceptible to sensations already moulded, he asked himself wearily and earnestly whether some new enchantment and distraction, some belated adventure of the emotions, might still be held in store for this idle traveller.

Then the flat coast emerged on the right; the sea was alive with fishing-smacks; the bathers' island ap-

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peared; it dropped behind to the left, the steamer slowly entered the narrow port which is named after it; and on the lagoon, facing gay ramshackle houses, it stopped completely, since it had to wait for the barque of the health department.

An hour passed before it appeared. He had arrived, and yet he had not; no one was in any hurry, no one was driven by impatience. The young men from Pola, patriotically attracted by the military bugle calls which rang over the water from the vicinity of the public gardens, had come on deck and, warmed by their Asti, they burst out with cheers for the drilling *bersagliere*. But it was repulsive to see what a state the primmed-up old man had been brought to by his comradeship with youth. His old head was not able to resist its wine like the young and robust: he was painfully drunk. With glazed eyes, a cigarette between his trembling fingers, he stood in one place, swaying backwards and forwards from giddiness, and balancing himself laboriously. Since he would have fallen at the first step, he did not trust himself from the spot—yet he showed a deplorable insolence, buttonholed everyone who came near him, stammered, winked and tittered, lifted his wrinkled, ornamented index finger in a stupid attempt at bantering, while he licked the corners of his mouth with his tongue in the most abominably suggestive manner. Aschenbach observed him darkly, and a feeling of numbness came over him again, as though the world were displaying a faint

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but irresistible tendency to distort itself into the peculiar and the grotesque: a feeling which circumstances prevented him from surrendering himself to completely, for just then the pounding activity of the engines commenced again, and the ship, resuming a voyage which had been interrupted so near its completion, passed through the San Marco canal.

So he saw it again, the most remarkable of landing-places, that blinding composition of fantastic buildings which the Republic lays out before the eyes of approaching seafarers: the soft splendour of the palace, the Bridge of Sighs, on the bank the columns with lion and saint, the advancing, showy flank of the enchanted temple, the glimpse through to the archway, and the giant clock. And as he looked on he thought that to reach Venice by land, on the railroad, was like entering a palace from the rear, and that this most unreal of cities should not be approached except as he was now doing, by ship, over the high seas.

The engine stopped, gondolas pressed in, the gangway was let down, customs officials climbed on board and discharged their duties perfunctorily; the disembarking could begin. Aschenbach made it understood that he wanted a gondola to take him and his luggage to the dock of those little steamers which ply between the city and the Lido, since he intended to locate near the sea. His plans were complied with, his wants were shouted down to the water, where the gondoliers were wrangling with one another in

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dialect. He was still hindered from descending; he was hindered by his trunk, which was being pulled and dragged with difficulty down the ladder-like steps. So that for some minutes he was not able to avoid the importunities of the atrocious old man, whose drunkenness gave him a sinister desire to do the foreigner parting honours. "We wish you a very agreeable visit," he bleated as he made an awkward bow. "We leave with pleasant recollections! *Au revoir, excusez, and bon jour, your excellency!*" His mouth watered, he pressed his eyes shut, he licked the corners of his mouth, and the dyed imperial turned up about his senile lips. "Our compliments," he mumbled, with two fingertips on his mouth, "our compliments to our sweetheart, the dearest prettiest sweetheart . . ." And suddenly his false upper teeth fell down on his lower lip. Aschenbach was able to escape. "To our sweetheart, our handsome sweetheart," he heard the cooing, hollow, stuttering voice behind him while, supporting himself against the hand-rail, he went down the gangway.

Who would not have to suppress a fleeting shudder, a vague timidity and uneasiness, if it were a matter of boarding a Venetian gondola for the first time or after several years? The strange craft, an entirely unaltered survival from the times of balladry, with that peculiar blackness which is found elsewhere only in coffins—it suggests silent, criminal adventures in the rippling night, it suggests even more strongly death itself, the bier and the mournful funeral, and

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the last silent journey. And has it been observed that the seat of such a barque, this arm-chair of coffin-black veneer and dull black upholstery, is the softest, most luxuriant, most lulling seat in the world? Aschenbach noted this when he had relaxed at the feet of the gondolier, opposite his luggage, which lay neatly assembled on the prow. The rowers were still wrangling, harshly, incomprehensibly, with threatening gestures. But the strange silence of this canal city seemed to soften their voices, to disembody them, and dissipate them over the water. It was warm here in the harbour. Touched faintly by the warm breeze of the sirocco, leaning back against the limber portions of the cushions, the traveller closed his eyes in the enjoyment of a lassitude which was as unusual with him as it was sweet. The trip would be short, he thought; if only it went on for ever! He felt himself glide with a gentle motion away from the crowd and the confusion of voices.

It became quieter and quieter around him! There was nothing to be heard but the splashing of the oar, the hollow slapping of the waves against the prow of the boat as it stood above the water black and bold and armed with its halberd-like tip, and a third sound, of speaking, of whispering—the whispering of the gondolier, who was talking to himself between his teeth, fitfully, in words that were pressed out by the exertion of his arms. Aschenbach looked up, and was slightly astonished to discover that the lagoon was widening, and he was headed for the

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open sea. This seemed to indicate that he ought not to rest too much, but should see to it that his wishes were carried out.

"To the steamer dock!" he repeated, turning around completely and looking into the face of the gondolier who stood behind on a raised platform and towered up between him and the dun-coloured sky. He was a man of unpleasant, even brutal appearance, dressed in sailor-blue, with a yellow sash; a formless straw hat, its weave partially unravelled, was tilted insolently on his head. The set of his face, the blond curly moustache beneath a curtly turned-up nose, undoubtedly meant that he was not Italian. Although of somewhat frail build, so that one would not have thought him especially well suited to his trade, he handled the oar with great energy, throwing his entire body into each stroke. Occasionally he drew back his lips from the exertion, and disclosed his white teeth. Wrinkling his reddish brows, he gazed on past his passenger, as he answered deliberately, almost gruffly: "You are going to the Lido." Aschenbach replied: "Of course. But I have just taken the gondola to get me across to San Marco. I want to use the *vaporetto*."

"You cannot use the *vaporetto*, sir."

"And why not?"

"Because the *vaporetto* will not haul luggage."

That was so; Aschenbach remembered. He was silent. But the fellow's harsh, presumptuous manner, so unusual towards a foreigner here, seemed

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unbearable. He said: "That is my affair. Perhaps I want to put my things in storage. You will turn back."

There was silence. The oar splashed, the water thudded against the bow. And the talking and whispering began again. The gondolier was talking to himself between his teeth.

What was to be done? This man was strangely insolent, and had an uncanny decisiveness; the traveller, alone with him on the water, saw no way of getting what he wanted. And besides, how softly he could rest, if only he did not become excited! Hadn't he wanted the trip to go on and on for ever? It was wisest to let things take their course, and the main thing was that he was comfortable. The poison of inertia seemed to be issuing from the seat, from this low, black-upholstered arm-chair, so gently cradled by the oar strokes of the imperious gondolier behind him. The notion that he had fallen into the hands of a criminal passed dreamily across Aschenbach's mind—without the ability to summon his thoughts to an active defence. The possibility that it was all simply a plan for cheating him seemed more abhorrent. A feeling of duty or pride, a kind of recollection that one should prevent such things, gave him the strength to arouse himself once more. He asked: "What are you asking for the trip?"

Looking down upon him, the gondolier answered: "You will pay."

It was plain how this should be answered. Aschen-

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bach said mechanically: "I shall pay nothing, absolutely nothing, if you don't take me where I want to go."

"You want to go to the Lido."

"But not with you."

"I am rowing you well."

That is so, Aschenbach thought, and relaxed. That is so; you are rowing me well. Even if you do have designs on my cash, and send me down to Pluto with a blow of your oar from behind, you will have rowed me well.

But nothing like that happened. They were even joined by others: a boatload of musical brigands, men and women, who sang to guitar and mandolin, riding persistently side by side with the gondola and filling the silence over the water with their covetous foreign poetry. A hat was held out, and Aschenbach threw in money. Then they stopped singing, and rowed away. And again the muttering of the gondolier could be heard as he talked fitfully and jerkily to himself.

So they arrived, tossed in the wake of a steamer plying towards the city. Two municipal officers, their hands behind their backs, their faces turned in the direction of the lagoon, were walking back and forth on the bank. Aschenbach left the gondola at the dock, supported by that old man who is stationed with his grappling-hook at each one of Venice's landing-places. And since he had no small money, he crossed over to the hotel by the steamer wharf to

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get change and pay the rower what was due him. He got what he wanted in the lobby, he returned and found his travelling-bags in a cart on the dock, and gondola and gondolier had vanished.

"He got out in a hurry," said the old man with the grappling-hook. "A bad man, a man without a licence, sir. He is the only gondolier who doesn't have a licence. The others telephoned here."

Aschenbach shrugged his shoulders.

"The gentleman rode for nothing," the old man said, and held out his hat. Aschenbach tossed in a coin. He gave instructions to have his luggage taken to the beach hotel, and followed the cart through the avenue, the white-blossomed avenue which, lined on both sides with taverns, shops, and boarding-houses, runs across the island to the shore.

He entered the spacious hotel from the rear, by the terraced garden, and passed through the vestibule and the lobby until he reached the desk. Since he had been announced, he was received with obliging promptness. A manager, a small, frail, flatteringly polite man with a black moustache and a French style frock-coat, accompanied him to the third floor in the lift, and showed him his room, an agreeable place furnished in cherry wood. It was decorated with strong-smelling flowers, and its high windows afforded a view out across the open sea. He stepped up to one of them after the employee had left; and while his luggage was being brought up and placed in the room behind him, he looked down on the

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beach (it was comparatively deserted in the afternoon) and on the sunless ocean which was at flood-tide and was sending long low waves against the bank in a calm regular rhythm.

The experiences of a man who lives alone and in silence are both vaguer and more penetrating than those of people in society; his thoughts are heavier, more odd, and touched always with melancholy. Images and observations which could easily be disposed of by a glance, a smile, an exchange of opinion, will occupy him unbearably, sink deep into the silence, become full of meaning, become life, adventure, emotion. Loneliness ripens the eccentric, the daringly and estrangingly beautiful, the poetic. But loneliness also ripens the perverse, the disproportionate, the absurd, and the illicit.—So, the things he had met with on the trip, the ugly old fop with his twaddle about sweethearts, the lawbreaking gondolier who was cheated of his pay, still left the traveller uneasy. Without really providing any resistance to the mind, without offering any solid stuff to think over, they were nevertheless profoundly strange, as it seemed to him, and disturbing precisely because of this contradiction. In the meanwhile, he greeted the sea with his eyes, and felt pleasure at the knowledge that Venice was so conveniently near. Finally he turned away, bathed his face, left orders to the chambermaid for a few things he still needed done to make his comfort complete, and let himself be

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taken to the ground floor by the green-uniformed Swiss who operated the lift.

He took his tea on the terrace facing the ocean, then descended and followed the boardwalk for quite a way in the direction of the Hotel Excelsior. When he returned it seemed time to dress for dinner. He did this with his usual care and slowness, since he was accustomed to working over his toilet. And yet he came down a little early to the lobby, where he found a great many of the hotel guests assembled, mixing distantly and with a show of mutual indifference to one another, but all waiting for meal-time. He took a paper from the table, dropped into a leather chair, and observed the company; they differed agreeably from the guests where he had first stopped.

A wide and tolerantly inclusive horizon was spread out before him. Sounds of all the principal languages formed a subdued murmur. The accepted evening dress, a uniform of good manners, brought all human varieties into a fitting unity. There were Americans with their long wry features, large Russian families, English ladies, German children with French nurses. The Slavic element seemed to predominate. Polish was being spoken near by.

It was a group of children gathered around a little wicker table, under the protection of a teacher or governess: three young girls, apparently fifteen to seventeen, and a long-haired boy about fourteen

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years old. With astonishment Aschenbach noted that the boy was absolutely beautiful. His face, pale and reserved, framed with honey-coloured hair, the straight sloping nose, the lovely mouth, the expression of sweet and godlike seriousness, recalled Greek sculpture of the noblest period; and the complete purity of the forms was accompanied by such a rare personal charm that, as he watched, he felt that he had never met with anything equally felicitous in nature or the plastic arts. He was further struck by the obviously intentional contrast with the principles of upbringing which showed in the sisters' attire and bearing. The three girls, the eldest of whom could be considered grown up, were dressed with a chasteness and severity bordering on disfigurement. Uniformly cloister-like costumes, of medium length, slate-coloured, sober, and deliberately unbecoming in cut, with white turned-down collars as the only relief, suppressed every possible appeal of shapeliness. Their hair, brushed down flat and tight against the head, gave their faces a nun-like emptiness and lack of character. Surely this was a mother's influence, and it had not even occurred to her to apply the pedagogical strictness to the boy which she seemed to find necessary for her girls. It was clear that in his existence the first factors were gentleness and tenderness. The shears had been resolutely kept from his beautiful hair; like a Prince Charming's, it fell in curls over his forehead, his ears, and still deeper, across his neck. The English

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sailor suit, with its braids, stitchings, and embroideries, its puffy sleeves narrowing at the ends and fitting snugly about the fine wrists of his still childish but slender hands, gave the delicate figure something rich and luxurious. He was sitting, half profile to the observer, one foot in its black patent-leather shoe placed before the other, an elbow resting on the arm of his wicker chair, a cheek pressed against his fist, in a position of negligent good manners, entirely free of the almost subservient stiffness to which his sisters seemed accustomed. Did he have some illness? For his skin stood out as white as ivory against the golden darkness of the surrounding curls. Or was he simply a pampered favourite child, made this way by a doting and moody love? Aschenbach inclined to believe the latter. Almost every artist is born with a rich and treacherous tendency to recognize injustices which have created beauty, and to meet aristocratic distinction with sympathy and reverence.

A waiter passed through and announced in English that the meal was ready. Gradually the guests disappeared through the glass door into the dining-hall. Stragglers crossed, coming from the entrance, or the lifts. Inside, they had already begun serving, but the young Poles were still waiting around the little wicker table; and Aschenbach, comfortably propped in his deep chair, and with this beauty before his eyes, stayed with them.

The governess, a small corpulent middle-class woman with a red face, finally gave the sign to rise.

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With lifted brows, she pushed back her chair and bowed, as a large woman dressed in grey and richly jewelled with pearls entered the lobby. This woman was advancing with coolness and precision; her lightly powdered hair and the lines of her dress were arranged with the simplicity which always signifies taste in those quarters where devoutness is taken as one element of dignity. She might have been the wife of some high German official. Except that her jewellery added something fantastically lavish to her appearance; indeed, it was almost priceless, and consisted of ear pendants and a very long triple chain of softly glowing pearls, as large as cherries.

The children had risen promptly. They bent over to kiss the hand of their mother who, with a distant smile on her well-preserved though somewhat tired and peaked features, looked over their heads and directed a few words to the governess in French. Then she walked to the glass door. The children followed her: the girls in the order of their age, after them the governess, the boy last. For some reason or other he turned around before crossing the sill, and since no one else was in the lobby his strange dusky eyes met those of Aschenbach, who, his newspaper on his knees, lost in thought, was gazing after the group.

What he saw had not been unusual in the slightest detail. They had not preceded the mother to the table; they had waited, greeted her with respect, and observed the customary forms on entering the room.

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But it had taken place so pointedly, with such an accent of training, duty, and self-respect, that Aschenbach felt peculiarly touched by it all. He delayed for a few moments, then he too crossed into the dining-room, and was assigned to his table, which, as he noted with a brief touch of regret, was very far removed from that of the Polish family.

Weary, and yet intellectually active, he entertained himself during the lengthy meal with abstract, or even transcendental things; he thought over the secret union which the lawful must enter upon with the individual for human beauty to result, from this he passed into general problems of form and art, and at the end he found that his thoughts and discoveries were like the seemingly felicitous promptings of a dream which, when the mind is sobered, are seen to be completely empty and unfit. After the meal, smoking, sitting, taking an occasional turn in the park with its smell of nightfall, he went to bed early and spent the night in a sleep deep and unbroken, but often enlivened with the apparitions of dreams.

The weather did not improve any the following day. A land breeze was blowing. Under a cloudy ashen sky, the sea lay in dull peacefulness; it seemed shrivelled up, with a close dreary horizon, and it had retreated from the beach, baring the long ribs of several sandbanks. As Aschenbach opened his window, he thought that he could detect the foul smell of the lagoon.

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He felt depressed. He thought already of leaving. Once, years ago, after several weeks of spring here, this same weather had afflicted him, and impaired his health so seriously that he had to abandon Venice like a fugitive. Was not this old feverish unrest again setting in, the pressure in the temples, the heaviness of the eyelids? It would be annoying to change his residence still another time; but if the wind did not turn, he could not stay here. To be safe, he did not unpack completely. He breakfasted at nine in the buffet-room provided for this purpose between the lobby and the dining-room.

That formal silence reigned here which is the ambition of large hotels. The waiters who were serving walked about on soft soles. Nothing was audible but the tinkling of the tea-things, a word half whispered. In one corner, obliquely across from the door, and two tables removed from his own, Aschenbach observed the Polish girls with their governess. Erect and red-eyed, their ash-blond hair freshly smoothed down, dressed in stiff blue linen with little white cuffs and turned-down collars—they were sitting there, handing around a glass of marmalade. They had almost finished their breakfast. The boy was missing.

Aschenbach smiled. "Well, little Phæacian!" he thought. "You seem to be enjoying the pleasant privilege of having your sleep out." And, suddenly exhilarated, he recited to himself the line: "A frequent change of dress; warm baths, and rest."

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He breakfasted without haste. From the porter, who entered the hall holding his braided cap in his hand, he received some forwarded mail; and while he smoked a cigarette he opened a few letters. In this way it happened that he was present at the entrance of the late sleeper who was being waited for over yonder.

He came through the glass door and crossed the room in silence to his sisters' table. His approach—the way he held the upper part of his body, and bent his knees, the movement of his white-shod feet—had an extraordinary charm; he walked very lightly, at once timid and proud, and this became still more lovely through the childish embarrassment with which, twice as he proceeded, he turned his face towards the centre of the room, raising and lowering his eyes. Smiling, with something half muttered in his soft vague tongue, he took his place; and now, as he turned his full profile to the observer, Aschenbach was again astonished, terrified even, by the really godlike beauty of this human child. To-day the boy was wearing a light blouse of blue and white striped cotton goods, with a red silk tie in front, and closed at the neck by a plain white high collar. This collar lacked the distinctiveness of the blouse, but above it the flowering head was poised with an incomparable seductiveness—the head of an Eros, in blended yellows of Parian marble, with fine serious brows, the temples and ears covered softly by the abrupt encroachment of his curls.

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“Good, good!” Aschenbach thought, with that deliberate expert appraisal which artists sometimes employ as a subterfuge when they have been carried away with delight before a masterwork. And he thought further: “Really, if the sea and the beach weren’t waiting for me, I should stay here as long as you stayed!” But he went then, passed through the lobby under the inspection of the servants, down the wide terrace, and straight across the boardwalk to the section of the beach reserved for the hotel guests. The barefoot old man in dungarees and straw hat who was functioning here as bathing-master assigned him to the bath-house he had rented; a table and a seat were placed on the sandy board platform, and he made himself comfortable in the lounge chair which he had drawn closer to the sea, out into the waxen yellow sand.

More than ever before, he was entertained and amused by the sights on the beach, this spectacle of carefree, civilized people getting sensuous enjoyment at the very edge of the elements. The grey flat sea was already alive with wading children, swimmers, a motley of figures lying on the sandbanks with arms bent behind their heads. Others were rowing about in little red and blue striped boats without keels; they were continually upsetting, amid laughter. Before the long stretches of bathing-houses, where people were sitting on the platforms as though on small verandas, there was a play of movement against the line of rest and inertness be-

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hind—visits and chatter, fastidious morning elegance alongside the nakedness which, boldly at ease, was enjoying the freedom which the place afforded. Farther in front, on the damp firm sand, people were parading about in white bathing-cloaks, in ample, brilliantly coloured wrappers. An elaborate sand pile to the right, erected by children, had flags in the colours of all nations planted around it. Venders of shells, cakes, and fruit spread out their wares, kneeling. To the left, before one of the bathing-houses which stood at right angles to the others and to the sea, a Russian family was encamped: men with beards and large teeth, slow delicate women, a Baltic girl sitting by an easel and painting the sea amidst exclamations of despair, two ugly good-natured children, an old maid servant who wore a kerchief on her head and had the alert scraping manners of a slave. Delighted and appreciative, they were living there, patiently calling the names of the two rowdy disobedient children, using their scanty Italian to joke with the humorous old man from whom they were buying candy, kissing one another on the cheek, and not in the least concerned with anyone who might be observing their community.

“Yes, I shall stay,” Aschenbach thought. “Where would things be better?” And, his hands folded in his lap, he let his eyes lose themselves in the expanses of the sea, his gaze gliding, swimming, and failing in the monotone mist of the wilderness of

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space. He loved the ocean for deep-seated reasons: because of that yearning for rest, when the hard-pressed artist hungers to shut out the exacting multiplicities of experience and hide himself on the breast of the simple, the vast; and because of a forbidden hankering—seductive, by virtue of its being directly opposed to his obligations—after the incommunicable, the incommensurate, the eternal, the non-existent. To be at rest in the face of perfection is the hunger of everyone who is aiming at excellence; and what is the non-existent but a form of perfection? But now, just as his dreams were so far out in vacancy, suddenly the horizontal fringe of the sea was broken by a human figure; and as he brought his eyes back from the unbounded, and focused them, it was the lovely boy who was there, coming from the left and passing him on the sand. He was barefooted, ready for wading, his slender legs exposed above the knees; he walked slowly, but as lightly and proudly as though it were the customary thing for him to move about without shoes; and he was looking around him towards the line of bathing-houses opposite. But as soon as he had noticed the Russian family, occupied with their own harmony and contentment, a cloud of scorn and detestation passed over his face. His brow darkened, his mouth was compressed, he gave his lips an embittered twist to one side so that the cheek was distorted and the forehead became so heavily furrowed that the eyes seemed sunken beneath its pressure:

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malicious and glowering, they spoke the language of hate. He looked down, looked back once more threateningly, then with his shoulder made an abrupt gesture of disdain and dismissal, and left the enemy behind him.

A kind of pudency or confusion, something like respect and shyness, caused Aschenbach to turn away as though he had seen nothing. For the earnest-minded who have been casual observers of some passion, struggle against making use, even to themselves, of what they have seen. But he was both cheered and unstrung—which is to say, he was happy. This childish fanaticism, directed against the most good-natured possible aspect of life—it brought the divinely arbitrary into human relationships; it made a delightful natural picture which had appealed only to the eye now seem worthy of a deeper sympathy; and it gave the figure of this half-grown boy, who had already been important enough by his sheer beauty, something to offset him still further, and to make one take him more seriously than his years justified. Still looking away, Aschenbach could hear the boy's voice, the shrill, somewhat weak voice with which, in the distance now, he was trying to call hello to his playfellows busied around the sand pile. They answered him, shouting back his name, or some affectionate nickname; and Aschenbach listened with a certain curiosity, without being able to catch anything more definite than two melodic syllables like "Adgio," or still more

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frequently "Adgiu," with a ringing *u*-sound prolonged at the end. He was pleased with the resonance of this; he found it adequate to the subject. He repeated it silently and, satisfied, turned to his letters and manuscripts.

His small portable writing-desk on his knees, he began writing with his fountain pen an answer to this or that bit of correspondence. But after the first fifteen minutes he found it a pity to abandon the situation—the most enjoyable he could think of—in this manner and waste it in activities which did not interest him. He tossed the writing-materials to one side, and he faced the ocean again; soon afterwards, diverted by the childish voices around the sand heap, he revolved his head comfortably along the back of the chair towards the right, to discover where that excellent little Adgio might be and what he was doing.

He was found at a glance; the red tie on his breast was not to be overlooked. Busied with the others in laying an old plank across the damp moat of the sand castle, he was nodding, and shouting instructions for this work. There were about ten companions with him, boys and girls of his age, and a few younger ones who were chattering with one another in Polish, French, and in several Balkan tongues. But it was his name which rang out most often. He was openly in demand, sought after, admired. One boy especially, like him a Pole, a stocky fellow who was called something like

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"Jaschu," with sleek black hair and a belted linen coat, seemed to be his closest vassal and friend. When the work on the sand structure was finished for the time being, they walked arm-in-arm along the beach, and the boy who was called "Jaschu" kissed the beauty.

Aschenbach was half minded to raise a warning finger. "I advise you, Cristobulus," he thought, smiling, "to travel for a year! For you need that much time at least to get over it." And then he breakfasted on large ripe strawberries which he got from a pedlar. It had become very warm, although the sun could no longer penetrate the blanket of mist in the sky. Laziness clogged his brain, even while his senses delighted in the numbing, drugging distractions of the ocean's stillness. To guess, to puzzle out just what name it was that sounded something like "Adgio," seemed to the sober man an appropriate ambition, a thoroughly comprehensive pursuit. And with the aid of a few scrappy recollections of Polish he decided that they must mean "Tadzio," the shortened form of "Tadeusz," and sounding like "Tadziu" when it is called.

Tadzio was bathing. Aschenbach, who had lost sight of him, spied his head and the arm with which he was propelling himself, far out in the water; for the sea must have been smooth for a long distance out. But already people seemed worried about him; women's voices were calling after him from the bathing-houses, uttering this name again and

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again. It almost dominated the beach like a battle-cry, and with its soft consonants, its long-drawn *u*-note at the end, it had something at once sweet and wild about it: "Tadziu! Tadziu!" He turned back; beating the resistant water into a foam with his legs, he hurried, his head bent down over the waves. And to see how this living figure, graceful and clean-cut in its advance, with dripping curls, and lovely as some frail god, came up out of the depths of sky and sea, rose and separated from the elements—this spectacle aroused a sense of myth, it was like some poet's recovery of time at its beginning, of the origin of forms and the birth of gods. Aschenbach listened with closed eyes to this song ringing within him, and he thought again that it was pleasant here, and that he would like to remain.

Later Tadzio was resting from his bath; he lay in the sand, wrapped in his white robe, which was drawn under the right shoulder, his head supported on his bare arm. And even when Aschenbach was not observing him, but was reading a few pages in his book, he hardly ever forgot that this boy was lying there and that it would cost him only a slight turn of his head to the right to behold the mystery. It seemed that he was sitting here just to keep watch over his repose—busied with his own concerns, and yet constantly aware of this noble picture at his right, not far in the distance. And he was stirred by a paternal affection, the profound leaning which those who have devoted their thoughts to the creation

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of beauty feel towards those who possess beauty itself.

A little past noon he left the beach, returned to the hotel, and was taken up to his room. He stayed there for some time in front of the mirror, looking at his grey hair, his tired sharp features. At this moment he thought of his reputation, and of the fact that he was often recognized on the streets and observed with respect, thanks to the sure aim and the appealing finish of his words. He called up all the exterior successes of his talent which he could think of, remembering also his elevation to the knighthood. Then he went down to the dining-hall for lunch, and ate at his little table. As he was riding up in the lift, after the meal was ended, a group of young people just coming from breakfast pressed into the swaying cage after him, and Tadzio entered too. He stood quite near to Aschenbach, for the first time so near that Aschenbach could see him, not with the aloofness of a picture, but in minute detail, in all his human particularities. The boy was addressed by someone or other, and as he was answering with an indescribably agreeable smile he stepped out again, on the second floor, walking backwards, and with his eyes lowered. "Beauty makes modest," Aschenbach thought, and he tried insistently to explain why this was so. But he had noticed that Tadzio's teeth were not all they should be; they were somewhat jagged and pale. The enamel did not look healthy; it had a peculiar

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brittleness and transparency, as is often the case with anæmics. "He is very frail, he is sickly," Aschenbach thought. "In all probability he will not grow old." And he refused to reckon with the feeling of gratification or reassurance which accompanied this notion.

He spent two hours in his room, and in the afternoon he rode in the *vaporetto* across the foul-smelling lagoon to Venice. He got off at San Marco, took tea on the Piazza, and then, in accord with his schedule for the day, he went for a walk through the streets. Yet it was this walk which produced a complete reversal in his attitudes and his plans.

An offensive sultriness lay over the streets. The air was so heavy that the smells pouring out of homes, stores, and eating-houses became mixed with oil, vapours, clouds of perfumes, and still other odours—and these would not blow away, but hung in layers. Cigarette smoke remained suspended, disappearing very slowly. The crush of people along the narrow streets irritated rather than entertained the walker. The farther he went, the more he was depressed by the repulsive condition resulting from the combination of sea air and sirocco, which was at the same time both stimulating and enervating. He broke into an uncomfortable sweat. His eyes failed him, his chest became tight, he had a fever, the blood was pounding in his head. He fled from the crowded business streets across a bridge into the walks of the poor. On a quiet

square, one of those forgotten and enchanting places which lie in the interior of Venice, he rested at the brink of a well, dried his forehead, and realized that he would have to leave here.

For the second and last time it had been demonstrated that this city in this kind of weather was decidedly unhealthy for him. It seemed foolish to attempt a stubborn resistance, while the prospects for a change of wind were completely uncertain. A quick decision was called for. It was not possible to go home this soon. Neither summer nor winter quarters were prepared to receive him. But this was not the only place where there were sea and beach; and elsewhere these could be found without the lagoon and its malarial mists. He remembered a little watering-place not far from Trieste which had been praised to him. Why not there? And without delay, so that this new change of location would still have time to do him some good. He pronounced this as good as settled, and stood up. At the next gondola station he took a boat back to San Marco, and was led through the dreary labyrinth of canals, under fancy marble balconies flanked with lions, around the corners of smooth walls, past the sorrowing façade of palaces which mirrored large dilapidated business-signs in the pulsing water. He had trouble arriving there, for the gondolier, who was in league with lace-makers and glass-blowers, was always trying to land him for inspections and purchases; and just as the bizarre trip through Venice

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would begin to cast its spell, the greedy business sense of the sunken Queen did all it could to destroy the illusion.

When he had returned to the hotel, he announced at the office before dinner that unforeseen developments necessitated his departure the following morning. He was assured of their regrets. He settled his accounts. He dined, and spent the warm evening reading the newspapers in a rocking-chair on the rear terrace. Before going to bed he got his luggage all ready for departure.

He did not sleep so well as he might, since the impending break-up made him restless. When he opened the window in the morning, the sky was as overcast as ever, but the air seemed fresher, and he was already beginning to repent. Hadn't his decision been somewhat hasty and uncalled for, the result of a passing diffidence and indisposition? If he had delayed a little, if, instead of surrendering so easily, he had made some attempt to adjust himself to the air of Venice or to wait for an improvement in the weather, he would not be so rushed and inconvenienced, but could anticipate another forenoon on the beach like yesterday's. Too late. Now he would have to go on wanting what he had wanted yesterday. He dressed, and at about eight o'clock rode down to the ground floor for breakfast.

As he entered, the buffet-room was still empty of guests. A few came in while he sat waiting for his order. With his tea-cup to his lips, he saw the

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Polish girls and their governess appear: rigid, with morning freshness, their eyes still red, they walked across to their table in the corner by the window. Immediately afterwards, the porter approached him, cap in hand, and warned him that it was time to go. The automobile is ready to take him and the other passengers to the Hotel Excelsior, and from here the motorboat will bring the ladies and gentlemen to the station through the company's private canal. Time is pressing.—Aschenbach found that it was doing nothing of the sort. It was still over an hour before his train left. He was irritated by this hotel custom of hustling departing guests out of the house, and indicated to the porter that he wished to finish his breakfast in peace. The man retired hesitatingly, to appear again five minutes later. It is impossible for the car to wait any longer. Then he would take a cab, and carry his trunk with him, Aschenbach replied in anger. He would use the public steamboat at the proper time, and he requested that it be left to him personally to worry about his departure. The employee bowed himself away. Pleased with the way he had warded off these importunate warnings, Aschenbach finished his meal at leisure; in fact, he even had the waiter bring him a newspaper. The time had become quite short when he finally arose. It was fitting that at the same moment Tadzio should come through the glass door.

On the way to his table he walked in the opposite

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direction to Aschenbach, lowering his eyes modestly before the man with the grey hair and high forehead, only to raise them again, in his delicious manner, soft and full upon him—and he had passed. “Good-bye, Tadzio!” Aschenbach thought. “I did not see much of you.” He did what was unusual with him, really formed the words on his lips and spoke them to himself; then he added: “God bless you!”—After this he left, distributed tips, was ushered out by the small gentle manager in the French frock-coat, and made off from the hotel on foot, as he had come, going along the white blossoming avenue which crossed the island to the steamer bridge, accompanied by the house servant carrying his hand luggage. He arrived, took his place—and then followed a painful journey through all the depths of regret.

It was the familiar trip across the lagoon, past San Marco, up the Grand Canal. Aschenbach sat on the circular bench at the bow, his arm supported against the railing, shading his eyes with his hand. The public gardens were left behind, the Piazzetta opened up once more in princely splendour and was gone, then came the great flock of palaces, and as the channel made a turn the magnificently slung marble arch of the Rialto came into view. The traveller was watching; his emotions were in conflict. The atmosphere of the city, this slightly foul smell of sea and swamp which he had been so anxious to avoid—he breathed it now in deep, ex-

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quisitely painful draughts. Was it possible that he had not known, had not considered, just how much he was attached to all this? What had been a partial misgiving this morning, a faint doubt as to the advisability of his move, now became a distress, a positive misery, a spiritual hunger, and so bitter that it frequently brought tears to his eyes, while he told himself that he could not possibly have foreseen it. Hardest of all to bear, at times completely insufferable, was the thought that he would never see Venice again, that this was a leave-taking for ever. Since it had been shown for the second time that the city affected his health, since he was compelled for the second time to get away in all haste, from now on he would have to consider it a place impossible and forbidden to him, a place which he was not equal to, and which it would be foolish for him to visit again. Yes, he felt that if he left now, he would be shamefaced and defiant enough never to see again the beloved city which had twice caused him a physical break-down. And of a sudden this struggle between his desires and his physical strength seemed to the aging man so grave and important, his physical defeat seemed so dishonourable, so much a challenge to hold out at any cost, that he could not understand the ready submissiveness of the day before, when he had decided to give in without attempting any serious resistance.

Meanwhile the steamboat was nearing the station; pain and perplexity increased, he became distracted.

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In his affliction, he felt that it was impossible to leave, and just as impossible to turn back. The conflict was intense as he entered the station. It was very late; there was not a moment to lose if he was to catch the train. He wanted to, and he did not want to. But time was pressing; it drove him on. He hurried to get his ticket, and looked about in the tumult of the hall for the officer on duty here from the hotel. The man appeared and announced that the large trunk had been transferred. Transferred already? Yes, thank you—to Como. To Como? And in the midst of hasty running back and forth, angry questions and confused answers, it came to light that the trunk had already been sent with other foreign baggage from the express office of the Hotel Excelsior in a completely wrong direction.

Aschenbach had difficulty in preserving the expression which was required under these circumstances. He was almost convulsed with an adventurous delight, an unbelievable hilarity. The employee rushed off to see if it were still possible to stop the trunk, and, as was to be expected, he returned with nothing accomplished. Aschenbach declared that he did not want to travel without his trunk, but had decided to go back and wait at the beach hotel for its return. Was the company's motorboat still at the station? The man assured him that it was lying at the door. With Italian volubility he persuaded the clerk at the ticket win-

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dow to redeem the cancelled ticket, he swore that they would act speedily, that no time or money would be spared in recovering the trunk promptly, and—so the strange thing happened that, twenty minutes after his arrival at the station, the traveller found himself again on the Grand Canal, returning to the Lido.

Here was an adventure, wonderful, abashing, and comically dreamlike beyond belief: places which he had just bid farewell to for ever in the most abject misery—yet he had been turned and driven back by fate, and was seeing them again in the same hour! The spray from the prow, washing between gondolas and steamers with an absurd agility, shot the speedy little craft ahead to its goal, while the lone passenger was hiding the nervousness and ebullience of a truant boy under a mask of resigned anger. From time to time he shook with laughter at this mishap which, as he told himself, could not have turned out better for a child of destiny. There were explanations to be given, expressions of astonishment to be faced—and then, he told himself, everything would be all right; then a misfortune would be avoided, a grave error rectified. And all that he had thought he was leaving behind him would be open to him again, there at his disposal. . . . And, to cap it all, was the rapidity of the ride deceiving him, or was the wind really coming from the sea?

The waves beat against the walls of the narrow

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canal which runs through the island to the Hotel Excelsior. An automobile omnibus was awaiting his return there, and took him above the rippling sea straight to the beach hotel. The little manager with moustache and long-tailed frock-coat came down the stairs to meet him.

He ingratiatingly regretted the episode, spoke of it as highly painful to him and the establishment, but firmly approved of Aschenbach's decision to wait here for the baggage. Of course his room had been given up, but there was another one, just as good, which he could occupy immediately. "*Pas de chance, Monsieur,*" the Swiss elevator boy smiled as they were ascending. And so the fugitive was established again, in a room almost identical with the other in its location and furnishings.

Tired out by the confusion of this strange forenoon, he distributed the contents of his hand-bag about the room and dropped into an arm-chair by the open window. The sea had become a pale green, the air seemed thinner and purer; the beach, with its cabins and boats, seemed to have colour, although the sky was still grey. Aschenbach looked out, his hands folded in his lap; he was content to be back, but shook his head disapprovingly at his irresolution, his failure to know his own mind. He sat here for the better part of an hour, resting and dreaming vaguely. About noon he saw Tadzio in a striped linen suit with a red tie, coming back from the sea across the private beach and along the boardwalk

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to the hotel. Aschenbach recognized him from this altitude before he had actually set eyes on him; he was about to think some such words as "Well, Tadzio, there you are again!" but at the same moment he felt this careless greeting go dumb before the truth in his heart. He felt the exhilaration of his blood, a conflict of pain and pleasure, and he realized that it was Tadzio who had made it so difficult for him to leave.

He sat very still, entirely unobserved from this height, and looked within himself. His features were alert, his eyebrows raised, and an attentive, keenly inquisitive smile distended his mouth. Then he raised his head, lifted both hands, which had hung relaxed over the arms of the chair, and in a slow twisting movement turned the palms upward—as though to suggest an opening and spreading outward of his arms. It was a spontaneous act of welcome, of calm acceptance.

IV

Day after day now the naked god with the hot cheeks drove his fire-breathing quadriga across the expanses of the sky, and his yellow locks fluttered in the assault of the east wind. A white silk sheen stretched over the slowly simmering Ponto. The sand glowed. Beneath the quaking silver blue of the ether, rust-coloured canvases were spread in front of the bathing-houses, and the afternoons were

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spent in the sharply demarcated spots of shade which they cast. But it was also delightful in the evening, when the vegetation in the park had the smell of balsam, and the stars were working through their courses above, and the soft persistent murmur of the sea came up enchantingly through the night. Such evenings contained the cheering promise that more sunny days of casual idleness would follow, dotted with countless closely interspersed possibilities of well-timed accidents.

The guest who was detained here by such an accommodating mishap did not consider the return of his property as sufficient grounds for another departure. He suffered some inconvenience for two days, and had to appear for meals in the large dining-room in his travelling-clothes. When the strayed luggage was finally deposited in his room again, he unpacked completely and filled the closet and drawers with his belongings; he had decided to remain here indefinitely, content now that he could pass the hours on the beach in a silk suit and appear for dinner at his little table again in appropriate evening dress.

The comfortable rhythm of this life had already cast its spell over him; he was soon enticed by the ease, the mild splendour, of his program. Indeed, what a place to be in, when the usual allurements of living in watering-places on southern shores was coupled with the immediate nearness of the most wonderful of all cities! Aschenbach was not a

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lover of pleasure. Whenever there was some call for him to take a holiday, to indulge himself, to have a good time—and this was especially true at an earlier age—restlessness and repugnance soon drove him back to his rigorous toil, the faithful sober efforts of his daily routine. Except that this place was bewitching him, relaxing his will, making him happy. In the mornings, under the shelter of his bathing-house, letting his eyes roam dreamily in the blue of the southern sea; or on a warm night as he leaned back against the cushions of the gondola carrying him under the broad starry sky home to the Lido from the Piazza di San Marco after long hours of idleness—and the brilliant lights, the melting notes of the serenade were being left behind—he often recalled his place in the mountains, the scene of his battles in the summer, where the clouds blew low across his garden, and terrifying storms put out the lamps at night, and the crows which he fed were swinging in the tops of the pine-trees. Then everything seemed just right to him, as though he were lifted into the Elysian fields, on the borders of the earth, where man enjoys the easiest life, where there is no snow or winter, nor storms and pouring rains, but where Oceanus continually sends forth gentle cooling breezes, and the days pass in a blessed inactivity, without work, without effort, devoted wholly to the sun and to the feast-days of the sun.

Aschenbach saw the boy Tadzio frequently, al-

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most constantly. Owing to the limited range of territory and the regularity of their lives, the beauty was near him at short intervals throughout the day. He saw him, met him, everywhere: in the lower rooms of the hotel, on the cooling water trips to the city and back, in the arcades of the square, and at times when he was especially lucky ran across him on the streets. But principally, and with the most gratifying regularity, the forenoon on the beach allowed him to admire and study this rare spectacle at his leisure. Yes, it was this guaranty of happiness, this daily recurrence of good fortune, which made his stay here so precious, and gave him such pleasure in the constant procession of sunny days.

He was up as early as he used to be when under the driving pressure of work, and was on the beach before most people, when the sun was still mild and the sea lay blinding white in the dreaminess of morning. He spoke amiably to the guard of the private beach, and also spoke familiarly to the barefoot, white-bearded old man who had prepared his place for him, stretching the brown canopy and bringing the furniture of the cabin out on the platform. Then he took his seat. There would now be three or four hours in which the sun mounted and gained terrific strength, the sea a deeper and deeper blue, and he might look at Tadzio.

He saw him approaching from the left, along the edge of the sea; he saw him as he stepped out backwards from among the cabins; or he would suddenly

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find, with a shock of pleasure, that he had missed his coming, that he was already here in the blue and white bathing-suit which was his only garment now while on the beach, that he had already commenced his usual activities in the sun and the sand—a pleasantly trifling, idle, and unstable manner of living, a mixture of rest and play. Tazio would saunter about, wade, dig, catch things, lie down, go for a swim, all the while being kept under surveillance by the women on the platform who made his name ring out in their falsetto voices: “Tadziu! Tadziu!” Then he would come running to them with a look of eagerness, to tell them what he had seen, what he had experienced, or to show them what he had found or caught: mussels, sea-horses, jelly-fish, and crabs that ran sideways. Aschenbach did not understand a word he said, and though it might have been the most ordinary thing in the world, it was a vague harmony in his ear. So the foreignness of the boy’s speech turned it into music, a wanton sun poured its prodigal splendour down over him, and his figure was always set off against the background of an intense sea-blue.

This piquant body was so freely exhibited that his eyes soon knew every line and posture. He was continually rediscovering with new pleasure all this familiar beauty, and his astonishment at its delicate appeal to his senses was unending. The boy was called to greet a guest who was paying his respects to the ladies at the bathing-house. He came

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running, running wet perhaps out of the water, tossed back his curls, and as he held out his hand, resting on one leg and raising his other foot on the toes, the set of his body was delightful; it had a charming expectancy about it, a well-meaning shyness, a winsomeness which showed his aristocratic training. . . . He lay stretched full length, his bath towel slung across his shoulders, his delicately chiselled arm supported in the sand, his chin in his palm; the boy called Jaschu was squatting near him and making up to him—and nothing could be more enchanting than the smile of his eyes and lips when the leader glanced up at his inferior, his servant. . . . He stood on the edge of the sea, alone, apart from his people, quite near to Aschenbach—erect, his hands locked across the back of his neck, he swayed slowly on the balls of his feet, looked dreamily into the blueness of sea and sky, while tiny waves rolled up and bathed his feet. His honey-coloured hair clung in rings about his neck and temples. The sun made the down on his back glitter; the fine etching of the ribs, the symmetry of the chest, were emphasized by the tightness of the suit across the buttocks. His armpits were still as smooth as those of a statue; the hollows of his knees glistened, and their bluish veins made his body seem built of some clearer stuff. What rigour, what precision of thought were expressed in this erect, youthfully perfect body! Yet the pure and strenuous will which, darkly at work, could bring such godlike

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sculpture to the light—was not he, the artist, familiar with this? Did it not operate in him too when he, under the press of frugal passions, would free from the marble mass of speech some slender form which he had seen in the mind and which he put before his fellows as a statue and a mirror of intellectual beauty?

Statue and mirror! His eyes took in the noble form there bordered with blue; and with a rush of enthusiasm he felt that in this spectacle he was catching the beautiful itself, form as the thought of God, the one pure perfection which lives in the mind, and which, in this symbol and likeness, had been placed here quietly and simply as an object of devotion. That was drunkenness; and eagerly, without thinking, the aging artist welcomed it. His mind was in travail; all that he had learned dropped back into flux; his understanding threw up age-old thoughts which he had inherited with youth though they had never before lived with their own fire. Is it not written that the sun diverts our attention from intellectual to sensual things? Reason and understanding, it is said, become so numbed and enchanted that the soul forgets everything out of delight with its immediate circumstances, and in astonishment becomes attached to the most beautiful object shined on by the sun; indeed, only with the aid of a body is it capable then of raising itself to higher considerations. To be sure, Amor did as the instructors of mathematics who show backward

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children tangible representations of the pure forms—similarly the god, in order to make the spiritual visible for us, readily utilize the form and colour of man's youth, and as a reminder he adorned these with the reflected splendour of beauty which, when we behold it, makes us flare up in pain and hope.

His enthusiasm suggested these things, put him in the mood for them. And from the noise of the sea and the lustre of the sun he wove himself a charming picture. Here was the old plane-tree, not far from the walls of Athens—a holy, shadowy place filled with the smell of *agnus castus* blossoms and decorated with ornaments and images sacred to Achelous and the Nymphs. Clear and pure, the brook at the foot of the spreading tree fell across the smooth pebbles; the cicadas were fiddling. But on the grass, which was like a pillow gently sloping to the head, two people were stretched out, in hiding from the heat of the day: an older man and a youth, one ugly and one beautiful, wisdom next to loveliness. And amid gallantries and skilfully engaging banter, Socrates was instructing Phædrus in matters of desire and virtue. He spoke to him of the hot terror which the initiate suffer when their eyes light on an image of the eternal beauty; spoke of the greed of the impious and the wicked who cannot think beauty when they see its likeness, and who are incapable of reverence; spoke of the holy distress which befalls the noble-minded when a god-like countenance, a perfect body, appears before

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them; they tremble and grow distracted, and hardly dare to raise their eyes, and they honour the man who possesses this beauty, yes, if they were not afraid of being thought downright madmen they would sacrifice to the beloved as to the image of a god. For beauty, my Phædrus, beauty alone is both lovely and visible at once; it is, mark me, the only form of the spiritual which we can receive through the senses. Else what would become of us if the divine, if reason and virtue and truth, should appear to us through the senses? Should we not perish and be consumed with love, as Semele once was with Zeus? Thus, beauty is the sensitive man's access to the spirit—but only a road, a means simply, little Phædrus. . . . And then this crafty suitor made the neatest remark of all; it was this, that the lover is more divine than the beloved, since the god is in the one, but not in the other—perhaps the most delicate, the most derisive thought which has ever been framed, and the one from which spring all the cunning and the profoundest pleasures of desire.

Writers are happiest with an idea which can become all emotion, and an emotion all idea. Just such a pulsating idea, such a precise emotion, belonged to the lonely man at this moment, was at his call. Nature, it ran, shivers with ecstasy when the spirit bows in homage before beauty. Suddenly he wanted to write. Eros loves idleness, they say, and he is suited only to idleness. But at this point in the crisis the affliction became a stimu-

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lus towards productivity. The incentive hardly mattered. A request, an agitation for an open statement on a certain large burning issue of culture and taste, was going about the intellectual world, and had finally caught up with the traveller here. He was familiar with the subject, it had touched his own experience; and suddenly he felt an irresistible desire to display it in the light of his own version. And he even went so far as to prefer working in Tadzio's presence, taking the scope of the boy as a standard for his writing, making his style follow the lines of this body which seemed godlike to him, and carrying his beauty over into the spiritual just as the eagle once carried the Trojan stag up into the ether. Never had his joy in words been more sweet. He had never been so aware that Eros is in the word as during those perilously precious hours when, at his crude table under the canopy, facing the idol and listening to the music of his voice, he followed Tadzio's beauty in the forming of his little tract, a page and a half of choice prose which was soon to excite the admiration of many through its clarity, its poise, and the vigorous curve of its emotion. Certainly it is better for people to know only the beautiful product as finished, and not in its conception, its conditions of origin. For knowledge of the sources from which the artist derives his inspiration would often confuse and alienate, and in this way detract from the effects of his mastery. Strange hours!

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Strangely enervating efforts! Rare creative intercourse between the spirit and body! When Aschenbach put away his work and started back from the beach, he felt exhausted, or in dispersion even; and it was as though his conscience were complaining after some transgression.

The following morning, as he was about to leave the hotel, he looked off from the steps and noticed that Tadzio, who was alone and was already on his way towards the sea, was just approaching the private beach. He was half tempted by the simple notion of seizing this opportunity to strike up a casual friendly acquaintanceship with the boy who had been the unconscious source of so much agitation and upheaval; he wanted to address him, and enjoy the answering look in his eyes. The boy was sauntering along, he could be overtaken; and Aschenbach quickened his pace. He reached him on the boardwalk behind the bathing-houses; was about to lay a hand on his head and shoulders; and some word or other, an amiable phrase in French, was on the tip of his tongue. But he felt that his heart, due also perhaps to his rapid stride, was beating like a hammer; and he was so short of breath that his voice would have been tight and trembling. He hesitated, he tried to get himself under control. Suddenly he became afraid that he had been walking too long so close behind the boy. He was afraid of arousing curiosity and causing him to look back questioningly. He made one more spurt,

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failed, surrendered, and passed with bowed head.

"Too late!" he thought immediately. Too late! Yet was it too late? This step which he had just been on the verge of taking would very possibly have put things on a sound, free and easy basis, and would have restored him to wholesome soberness. But the fact was that Aschenbach did not want soberness: his intoxication was too precious. Who can explain the stamp and the nature of the artist? Who can understand this deep instinctive welding of discipline and licence? For to be unable to want wholesome soberness, is licence. Aschenbach was no longer given to self-criticism. His tastes, the mental calibre of his years, his self-respect, ripeness, and a belated simplicity made him unwilling to dismember his motives and to debate whether his impulses were the result of conscientiousness or of dissolution and weakness. He was embarrassed, as he feared that someone or other, if only the guard on the beach, must have observed his pursuit and defeat. He was very much afraid of the ridiculous. Further, he joked with himself about his comically pious distress. "Downed," he thought, "downed like a rooster, with his wings hanging miserably in the battle. It really is a god who can, at one sight of his loveliness, break our courage this way and force down our pride so thoroughly. . . ." He toyed and skirmished with his emotions, and was far too haughty to be afraid of them.

He had already ceased thinking about the time

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when the vacation period which he had fixed for himself would expire; the thought of going home never even suggested itself. He had sent for an ample supply of money. His only concern was with the possible departure of the Polish family; by a casual questioning of the hotel barber he had contrived to learn that these people had come here only a short time before his own arrival. The sun browned his face and hands, the invigorating salt breezes made him feel fresher. Once he had been in the habit of expending on his work every bit of nourishment which food, sleep, or nature could provide him; and similarly now he was generous and uneconomical, letting pass off as elation and emotion all the daily strengthening derived from the sun, idleness, and sea air.

His sleep was fitful; the precious uniform days were separated by short nights of happy unrest. He did retire early, for at nine o'clock, when Tadzio had disappeared from the scene, the day seemed over. But at the first grey of dawn he was awakened by a gently insistent shock; he suddenly remembered his adventure, he could no longer remain in bed; he arose and, clad lightly against the chill of morning, he sat down by the open window to await the rising of the sun. Toned by his sleep, he watched this miraculous event with reverence. Sky, earth, and sea still lay in glassy, ghostlike twilight; a dying star still floated in the emptiness of space. But a breeze started up, a winged message from habitations be-

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yond reach, telling that Eos was rising from beside her husband. And that first sweet reddening in the farthest stretches of sky and sea took place by which the sentiency of creation is announced. The goddess was approaching, the seductress of youth who stole Cleitus and Cephalus, and despite the envy of all the Olympians enjoyed the love of handsome Orion. A strewing of roses began there on the edge of the world, an unutterably pure glowing and blooming. Childish clouds, lighted and shined through, floated like busy little Cupids in the rosy, bluish mist. Purple fell upon the sea, which seemed to be simmering, and washing the colour towards him. Golden spears shot up into the sky from behind. The splendour caught fire, silently; with godlike power an intense flame of licking tongues broke out—and with rattling hoofs the brother's sacred chargers mounted the horizon. Lighted by the god's brilliance, he sat there, keeping watch alone. He closed his eyes, letting this glory play against the lids. Past emotions, precious early afflictions and yearnings which had been stifled by his rigorous program of living, were now returning in such strange new forms. With an embarrassed, astonished smile, he recognized them. He was thinking, dreaming; slowly his lips formed a name. And still smiling, with his face turned upwards, hands folded in his lap, he fell asleep again in his chair.

But the day which began with such fiery solemnity underwent a strange mythical transformation.

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Where did the breeze originate which suddenly began playing so gently and insinuatingly, like some whispered suggestion, about his ears and temples? Little white choppy clouds stood in the sky in scattered clumps, like the pasturing herds of the gods. A stronger wind arose, and the steeds of Poseidon came prancing up, and along with them the steers which belonged to the blue-locked god, bellowing and lowering their horns as they ran. Yet among the detritus of the more distant beach, waves were hopping forward like agile goats. He was caught in the enchantment of a sacredly distorted world full of Panic life—and he dreamed delicate legends. Often, when the sun was sinking behind Venice, he would sit on a bench in the park observing Tadzio, who was dressed in a white suit with a coloured sash and was playing ball on the smooth gravel—and it was Hyacinth that he seemed to be watching, Hyacinth who was to die because two gods loved him. Yes, he felt Zephyr's aching jealousy of the rival who forgot the oracle, the bow, and the lyre, in order to play for ever with this beauty. He saw the discus, guided by a pitiless envy, strike the lovely head; he too, growing pale, caught the drooping body—and the flower, sprung from this sweet blood, bore the inscription of his unending grief.

Nothing is more unusual and strained than the relationship between people who know each other only with their eyes, who meet daily, even hourly, and yet are compelled, by force of custom or their own

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caprices, to say no word or make no move of acknowledgment, but to maintain the appearance of an aloof unconcern. There is a restlessness and a surcharged curiosity existing between them, the hysteria of an unsatisfied, unnaturally repressed desire for acquaintanceship and intercourse; and especially there is a kind of tense respect. For one person loves and honours another so long as he cannot judge him, and desire is an evidence of incomplete knowledge.

Some kind of familiarity had necessarily to form itself between Aschenbach and young Tadzio; and it gave the elderly man keen pleasure to see that his sympathies and interests were not left completely unanswered. For example, when the boy appeared on the beach in the morning and was going towards his family's bathing-house, what had induced him never to use the boardwalk on the far side of it any more, but to stroll along the front path, through the sand, past Aschenbach's habitual place, and often unnecessarily close to him, almost touching his table, or his chair even? Did the attraction, the fascination of an overpowering emotion have such an effect upon the frail unthinking object of it? Aschenbach watched daily for Tadzio to approach; and sometimes he acted as though he were occupied when this event was taking place, and he let the boy pass unobserved. But at other times he would look up, and their glances met. They were both in deep earnest when this occurred. Nothing in the elderly man's cultivated and dignified expression betrayed any

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inner movement; but there was a searching look in Tadzio's eyes, a thoughtful questioning—he began to falter, looked down, then looked up again charmingly, and, when he had passed, something in his bearing seemed to indicate that it was only his breeding which kept him from turning around.

Once, however, one evening, things turned out differently. The Polish children and their governess had been missing at dinner in the large hall; Aschenbach had noted this uneasily. After the meal, disturbed by their absence, Aschenbach was walking in evening dress and straw hat in front of the hotel at the foot of the terrace, when suddenly he saw the nunlike sisters appear in the light of the arc-lamp, accompanied by their governess and with Tadzio a few steps behind. Evidently they were coming from the steamer pier after having dined for some reason in the city. It must have been cool on the water; Tadzio was wearing a dark blue sailor overcoat with gold buttons, and on his head he had a cap to match. The sun and sea air had not browned him; his skin still had the same yellow marble colour as at first. It even seemed paler to-day than usual, whether from the coolness or from the blanching moonlight of the lamps. His regular eyebrows showed up more sharply, the darkness of his eyes was deeper. It is hard to say how beautiful he was; and Aschenbach was distressed, as he had often been before, by the thought that words can only evaluate sensuous beauty, but not re-give it.

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He had not been prepared for this rich spectacle; it came un hoped for. He had no time to entrench himself behind an expression of repose and dignity. Pleasure, surprise, admiration must have shown on his face as his eyes met those of the boy—and at this moment it happened that Tadzio smiled, smiled to him, eloquently, familiarly, charmingly, without concealment; and during the smile his lips slowly opened. It was the smile of Narcissus bent over the reflecting water, that deep, fascinated, magnetic smile with which he stretches out his arms to the image of his own beauty—a smile distorted ever so little, distorted at the hopelessness of his efforts to kiss the pure lips of the shadow. It was coquettish, inquisitive, and slightly tortured. It was infatuated, and infatuating.

He had received this smile, and he hurried away as though he carried a fatal gift. He was so broken up that he was compelled to escape the light of the terrace and the front garden; he hastily hunted out the darkness of the park in the rear. Strangely indignant and tender admonitions wrung themselves out of him: “You dare not smile like that! Listen, no one dare smile like that to another!” He threw himself down on a bench; in a frenzy he breathed the night smell of the vegetation. And leaning back, his arms loose, overwhelmed, with frequent chills running through him, he whispered the fixed formula of desire—impossible in this case, absurd, abject,

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ridiculous, and yet holy, even in this case venerable:
"I love you!"

V

During his fourth week at the Lido, Gustav von Aschenbach made several sinister observations touching on the world about him. First, it seemed to him that as the season progressed the number of guests at the hotel was diminishing rather than increasing; and German especially seemed to be dropping away, so that finally he heard nothing but foreign sounds at table and on the beach. Then one day in conversation with the barber, whom he visited often, he caught a word which startled him. The man had mentioned a German family that left soon after their arrival; he added glibly and flatteringly: "But you are staying, sir. You have no fear of the plague." Aschenbach looked at him. "The plague?" he repeated. The gossip was silent, made out as though busy with other things, ignored the question. When it was put more insistently, he declared that he knew nothing, and with embarrassing volubility he tried to change the subject.

That was about noon. In the afternoon there was a calm, and Aschenbach rode to Venice under an intense sun. For he was driven by a mania to follow the Polish children whom he had seen with their governess taking the road to the steamer pier. He

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did not find the idol at San Marco. But while sitting over his tea at his little round iron table on the shady side of the square, he suddenly detected a peculiar odour in the air which, it seemed to him now, he had noticed for days without being consciously aware of it. The smell was sweetish and drug-like, suggesting sickness, and wounds, and a suspicious cleanliness. He tested and examined it thoughtfully, finished his luncheon, and left the square on the side opposite the church. The smell was stronger where the street narrowed. On the corners printed posters were hung, giving municipal warnings against certain diseases of the gastric system liable to occur at this season, against the eating of oysters and clams, and also against the water of the canals. The euphemistic nature of the announcement was palpable. Groups of people had collected in silence on the bridge and squares; and the foreigner stood among them, scenting and investigating.

At a little shop he inquired about the fatal smell, asking the proprietor, who was leaning against his door surrounded by coral chains and imitation amethyst jewellery. The man measured him with heavy eyes, and brightened up hastily. "A matter of precaution, sir!" he answered with a gesture. "A regulation of the police which must be taken for what it is worth. This weather is oppressive, the sirocco is not good for the health. In short, you understand—an exaggerated prudence perhaps." Aschenbach thanked him and went on. Also on the

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steamer back to the Lido he caught the smell of the disinfectant.

Returning to the hotel, he went immediately to the periodical stand in the lobby and ran through the papers. He found nothing in the foreign language press. The domestic press spoke of rumours, produced hazy statistics, repeated official denials and questioned their truthfulness. This explained the departure of the German and Austrian guests. Obviously, the subjects of the other nations knew nothing, suspected nothing, were not yet uneasy. "To keep it quiet!" Aschenbach thought angrily, as he threw the papers back on the table. "To keep that quiet!" But at the same moment he was filled with satisfaction over the adventure that was to befall the world about him. For passion, like crime, is not suited to the secure daily rounds of order and well-being; and every slackening in the *bourgeois* structure, every disorder and affliction of the world, must be held welcome, since they bring with them a vague promise of advantage. So Aschenbach felt a dark contentment with what was taking place, under cover of the authorities, in the dirty alleys of Venice. This wicked secret of the city was welded with his own secret, and he too was involved in keeping it hidden. For in his infatuation he cared about nothing but the possibility of Tadzio's leaving, and he realized with something like terror that he would not know how to go on living if this occurred.

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Lately he had not been relying simply on good luck and the daily routine for his chances to be near the boy and look at him. He pursued him, stalked him. On Sundays, for instance, the Poles never appeared on the beach. He guessed that they must be attending mass at San Marco. He hurried there; and, stepping from the heat of the square into the golden twilight of the church, he found the boy he was hunting, bowed over a *prie-dieu*, praying. Then he stood in the background, on the cracked mosaic floor, with people on all sides kneeling, murmuring, and making the sign of the cross. And the compact grandeur of this oriental temple weighed heavily on his senses. In front, the richly ornamented priest was conducting the office, moving about and singing; incense poured forth, clouding the weak little flame of the candle on the alter—and with the sweet, stuffy sacrificial odour another seemed to commingle faintly: the smell of the infested city. But through the smoke and the sparkle Aschenbach saw how the boy there in front turned his head, hunted him out, and looked at him.

When the crowd was streaming out through the opened portals into the brilliant square with its swarms of pigeons, the lover hid in the vestibule; he kept under cover, he lay in wait. He saw the Poles quit the church, saw how the children took ceremonious leave of their mother, and how she turned towards the Piazzetta on her way home. He made sure that the boy, the nunlike sisters, and the govern-

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ess took the road to the right through the gateway of the clock tower and into the Merceria. And after giving them a slight start, he followed, followed them furtively on their walk through Venice. He had to stand still when they stopped, had to take flight in shops and courts to let them pass when they turned back. He lost them; hot and exhausted, he hunted them over bridges and down dirty blind-alleys—and he underwent minutes of deadly agony when suddenly he saw them coming towards him in a narrow passage where escape was impossible. Yet it could not be said that he suffered. He was drunk, and his steps followed the promptings of the demon who delights in treading human reason and dignity underfoot.

In one place Tadzio and his companions took a gondola; and shortly after they had pushed off from the shore, Aschenbach, who had hidden behind some structure, a well, while they were climbing in, now did the same. He spoke in a hurried undertone as he directed the rower, with the promise of a generous tip, to follow unnoticed and at a distance that gondola which was just rounding the corner. And he thrilled when the man, with the roguish willingness of an accomplice, assured him in the same tone that his wishes would be carried out, carried out faithfully.

Leaning back against the soft black cushions, he rocked and glided towards the other black-beaked craft where his passion was drawing him. At times it escaped; then he felt worried and uneasy. But his pilot, as though skilled in such commissions, was

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always able through sly manœuvres, speedy diagonals and shortcuts, to bring the quest into view again. The air was quiet and smelly, the sun burned down strong through the slate-coloured mist. Water slapped against the wood and stone. The call of the gondolier, half warning, half greeting, was answered with a strange obedience far away in the silence of the labyrinth. White and purple umbels with the scent of almonds hung down from little elevated gardens over crumbling walls. Arabian window-casings were outlined through the murkiness. The marble steps of a church descended into the water; a beggar squatted there, protesting his misery, holding out his hat, and showing the whites of his eyes as though he were blind. An antiquarian in front of his den fawned on the passer-by and invited him to stop in the hopes of swindling him. That was Venice, the flatteringly and suspiciously beautiful—this city, half legend, half snare for strangers; in its foul air art once flourished gluttonously, and had suggested to its musicians seductive notes which cradle and lull. The adventurer felt as though his eyes were taking in this same luxury, as though his ears were being won by just such melodies. He recalled too that the city was diseased and was concealing this through greed—and he peered more eagerly after the retreating gondola.

Thus, in his infatuation, he wanted simply to pursue uninterrupted the object that aroused him, to dream of it when it was not there, and, after the

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fashion of lovers, to speak softly to its mere outline. Loneliness, strangeness, and the joy of a deep belated intoxication encouraged him and prompted him to accept even the remotest things without reserve or shame—with the result that as he returned late in the evening from Venice, he stopped on the second floor of the hotel before the door of the boy's room, laid his head in utter drunkenness against the hinge of the door, and for a long time could not drag himself away despite the danger of being caught and embarrassed in such a mad situation.

Yet there were still moments of relief when he came partly to his senses. "Where to!" he would think, alarmed. "Where to!" Like every man whose natural abilities stimulate an aristocratic interest in his ancestry, he was accustomed to think of his forbears in connexion with the accomplishments and successes of his life, to assure himself of their approval, their satisfaction, their undeniable respect. He thought of them now, entangled as he was in such an illicit experience, caught in such exotic transgressions. He thought of their characteristic rigidity of principle, their scrupulous masculinity—and he smiled dejectedly. What would they say? But then, what would they have said to his whole life, which was almost degenerate in its departure from theirs, this life under the bane of art—a life against which he himself had once issued such youthful mockeries out of loyalty to his fathers, but which at bottom had been so much like theirs! He too had

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served, he too had been a soldier and a warrior like many of them—for art was a war, a destructive battle, and one was not equal to it for long, these days. A life of self-conquest and of in-spite-ofs, a rigid, sober, and unyielding life which he had formed into the symbol of a delicate and timely heroism. He might well call it masculine, or brave; and it almost seemed as though the Eros mastering him were somehow peculiarly adapted and inclined to such a life. Had not this Eros stood in high repute among the bravest of peoples; was it not true that precisely through bravery he had flourished in their cities? Numerous war heroes of antiquity had willingly borne his yoke, for nothing was deemed a disgrace which the god imposed; and acts which would have been rebuked as the sign of cowardice if they had been done for other purposes—prostrations, oaths, entreaties, abjectness—such things did not bring shame upon the lover, but rather he reaped praise for them.

In this way his infatuation determined the course of his thoughts, in this way he tried to uphold himself, to preserve his respect. But at the same time, selfish and calculating, he turned his attention to the unclean transactions here in Venice, this adventure of the outer world which conspired darkly with his own and which fed his passion with vague lawless hopes.

Bent on getting reliable news of the condition and progress of the pestilence, he ransacked the local

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papers in the city cafés, as they had been missing from the reading-table of the hotel lobby for several days now. Statements alternated with disavowals. The number of the sick and dead was supposed to reach twenty, forty, or even a hundred and more—and immediately afterwards every instance of the plague would be either flatly denied or attributed to completely isolated cases which had crept in from the outside. There were scattered admonitions, protests against the dangerous conduct of foreign authorities. Certainty was impossible. Nevertheless the lone man felt especially entitled to participate in the secret; and although he was excluded, he derived a grotesque satisfaction from putting embarrassing questions to those who did know, and, as they were pledged to silence, forcing them into deliberate lies. One day at breakfast in the large dining-hall he entered into a conversation with the manager, that softly-treading little man in the French frock-coat who was moving amiably and solicitously about among the diners and had stopped at Aschenbach's table for a few passing words. Just why, the guest asked negligently and casually, had disinfectants become so prevalent in Venice recently? "It has to do," was the evasive answer, "with a police regulation, and is intended to prevent any inconveniences or disturbances to the public health which might result from the exceptionally warm and threatening weather." . . . "The police are to be congratu-

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lated," Aschenbach answered; and after the exchange of a few remarks on the weather, the manager left.

Yet that same day, in the evening, after dinner, it happened that a little band of strolling singers from the city gave a performance in the front garden of the hotel. Two men and two women, they stood by the iron post of an arc-lamp and turned their whitened faces up towards the large terrace where the guests were enjoying this folk-recital over their coffee and cooling drinks. The hotel personnel, bell-boys, waiters, and clerks from the office, could be seen listening by the doors of the vestibule. The Russian family, eager and precise in their amusements, had had wicker chairs placed in the garden in order to be nearer the performers; and they were sitting here in an appreciative semicircle. Behind the ladies and gentlemen, in her turban-like kerchief, stood the old slave.

Mandolin, guitar, harmonica, and a squeaky violin were responding to the touch of the virtuoso beggars. Instrumental numbers alternated with songs, as when the younger of the women, with a sharp trembling voice, joined with the sweetly falsetto tenor in a languishing love duet. But the real talent and leader of the group was undoubtedly the other of the two men, the one with the guitar. He was a kind of *buffo* baritone, with not much of a voice, although he did have a gift for pantomime, and a remarkable comic energy. Often, with his large instrument

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under his arm, he would leave the rest of the group and, still acting, would intrude on the platform, where his antics were rewarded with encouraging laughter. Especially the Russians in their seats down front seemed to be enchanted with so much southern mobility, and their applause incited him to let himself out more and more boldly and assertively.

Aschenbach sat on the balustrade, cooling his lips now and then with a mixture of pomegranate juice and soda which glowed ruby-red in his glass in front of him. His nerves took in the miserable notes, the vulgar crooning melodies; for passion lames the sense of discrimination, and surrenders in all seriousness to appeals which, in sober moments, are either humorously allowed for or rejected with annoyance. At the clown's antics his features had twisted into a set painful smile. He sat there relaxed, although inwardly he was intensely awake; for six paces from him Tadzio was leaning against the stone hand-rail.

In the white belted coat which he often wore at meal times, he was standing in a position of spontaneous and inborn gracefulness, his left forearm on the railing, feet crossed, the right hand on a supporting hip; and he looked down at the street-singers with an expression which was hardly a smile, but only an aloof curiosity, a polite amiability. Often he would stand erect and, expanding his chest, would draw the white smock down under his leather belt with a beautiful gesture. And then too, the aging man observed with a tumult of fright and triumph

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how he would often turn his head over the left shoulder in the direction of his admirer, carefully and hesitatingly, or even with abruptness as though to attack by surprise. He did not meet Aschenbach's eyes, for a mean precaution compelled the transgressor to keep from staring at him: in the background of the terrace the women who guarded Tadzio were sitting, and things had reached a point where the lover had to fear he might be noticed and suspected. Yes, he had often observed with a kind of numbness how, when Tadzio was near him, on the beach, in the hotel lobby, in the Piazza San Marco, they called him back, they were set on keeping him at a distance—and this wounded him frightfully, causing his pride unknown tortures which his conscience would not permit him to evade.

Meanwhile the guitar-player had begun a solo to his own accompaniment, a street-ballad popular throughout Italy. It had several strophes, and the entire company joined each time in the refrain, all singing and playing, while he managed to give a plastic and dramatic twist to the performance. Of slight build, with thin and impoverished features, he stood on the gravel, apart from his companions, in an attitude of insolent bravado, his shabby felt hat on the back of his head so that a bunch of his red hair jutted out from under the brim. And to the thrumming of the strings he flung his jokes up at the terrace in a penetrating recitative; while the veins were swelling on his forehead from the exertion

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of his performance. He did not seem of Venetian stock, but rather of the race of Neapolitan comedians, half pimp, half entertainer, brutal and audacious, dangerous and amusing. His song was stupid enough so far as the words went; but in his mouth, by his gestures, the movements of his body, his way of blinking significantly and letting the tongue play across his lips, it acquired something ambiguous, something vaguely repulsive. In addition to the customary civilian dress, he was wearing a sport shirt; and his skinny neck protruded above the soft collar, baring a noticeably large and active Adam's-apple. He was pale and snub-nosed. It was hard to fix an age to his beardless features, which seemed furrowed with grimaces and depravity; and the two wrinkles standing arrogantly, harshly, almost savagely between his reddish eyebrows were strangely suited to the smirk on his mobile lips. Yet what really prompted the lonely man to pay him keen attention was the observation that the questionable figure seemed also to provide its own questionable atmosphere. For each time they came to the refrain the singer, amid buffoonery and familiar handshakes, began a grotesque circular march which brought him immediately beneath Aschenbach's place; and each time this happened, there blew up to the terrace from his clothes and body a strong carbohc smell.

After the song was ended, he began collecting money. He started with the Russians, who were evidently willing to spend, and then came up the

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stairs. Up here he showed himself just as humble as he had been bold during the performance. Cringing and bowing, he stole about among the tables, and a smile of obsequious cunning exposed his strong teeth, while the two wrinkles still stood ominously between his red eyebrows. This singular character collecting money to live on—they eyed him with a curiosity and a kind of repugnance, they tossed coins into his felt hat with the tips of their fingers, and were careful not to touch him. The elimination of the physical distance between the comedian and the audience, no matter how great the enjoyment may have been, always causes a certain uneasiness. He felt it, and tried to excuse it by grovelling. He came up to Aschenbach, and along with him the smell, which no one else seemed concerned about.

“Listen!” the recluse said in an undertone, almost mechanically. “They are disinfecting Venice. Why?” The jester answered hoarsely: “On account of the police. That is a precaution, sir, with such heat, and the sirocco. The sirocco is oppressive. It is not good for the health.” He spoke as though astonished that anyone could ask such things, and demonstrated with his open hand how oppressive the sirocco was. “Then there is no plague in Venice?” Aschenbach asked quietly, between his teeth. The clown’s muscular features fell into a grimace of comical embarrassment. “A plague? What kind of plague? Perhaps our police are a plague? You like to joke! A plague! Of all things! A pre-

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cautionary measure, you understand! A police regulation against the effects of the oppressive weather." He gesticulated. "Very well," Aschenbach said several times curtly and quietly; and he quickly dropped an unduly large coin into the hat. Then with his eyes he signalled the man to leave. He obeyed, smirking and bowing. But he had not reached the stairs before two hotel employees threw themselves upon him, and with their faces close to his began a whispered cross-examination. He shrugged his shoulders; he gave assurances, he swore that he had kept quiet—that was evident. He was released, and he returned to the garden; then, after a short conference with his companions, he stepped out once more for a final song of thanks and leave-taking.

It was a rousing song which the recluse never recalled having heard before, a "big number" in incomprehensible dialect, with a laugh refrain in which the troupe joined regularly at the tops of their voices. At this point both the words and the accompaniment of the instruments stopped, with nothing left but a laugh which was somehow arranged rhythmically although very naturally done—and the soloist especially showed great talent in giving it a most deceptive vitality. At the renewal of his professional distance from the audience, he recovered all his boldness again, and the artificial laugh that he directed up towards the terrace was derisive. Even before the end of the articulate portion of the strophe, he seemed to struggle against an irresistible tickling. He

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gulped, his voice trembled, he pressed his hand over his mouth, he contorted his shoulders; and at the proper moment the ungovernable laugh broke out of him, burst into such real cackles that it was infectious and communicated itself to the audience, so that on the terrace also an unfounded hilarity, living off itself alone, started up. But this seemed to double the singer's exuberance. He bent his knees, he slapped his thighs, he nearly split himself; he no longer laughed, he shrieked. He pointed up with his finger, as though nothing were more comic than the laughing guests there, and finally everyone in the garden and on the veranda was laughing, even to the waiters, bell-boys, and house-servants in the doorways.

Aschenbach was no longer resting in his chair; he sat upright, as if attempting to defend himself, or to escape. But the laughter, the whiffs of the hospital smell, and the boy's nearness combined to put him into a trance that held his mind and his senses hopelessly captive. In the general movement and distraction he ventured to glance across at Tadzio, and as he did so he dared observe that the boy, in reply to his glance, was equally serious, much as though he had modelled his conduct and expression after those of one man, and the prevalent mood had no effect on him since this one man was not part of it. This portentous childish obedience had something so disarming and overpowering about it that the grey-haired man could hardly restrain himself from bury-

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ing his face in his hands. It had also seemed to him that Tadzio's occasional stretching and quick breathing indicated a complaint, a congestion, of the lungs. "He is sickly, he will probably not grow old," he thought repeatedly with that positiveness which is often a peculiar relief to desire and passion. And along with pure solicitude he had a feeling of rakish gratification.

Meanwhile the Venetians had ended and were leaving. Applause accompanied them, and their leader did not miss the opportunity to cover his retreat with further jests. His bows, the kisses he blew, were laughed at—and so he doubled them. When his companions were already gone, he acted as though he had hurt himself by backing into a lamp-post, and he crept through the gate seemingly crippled with pain. Then he suddenly threw off the mask of comic hard luck, stood upright, hurried away jauntily, stuck out his tongue insolently at the guests on the terrace, and slipped into the darkness. The company was breaking up; Tadzio had been missing from the balustrade for some time. But, to the displeasure of the waiters, the lonely man sat for a long while over the remains of his pomegranate drink. Night advanced. Time was crumbling. In the house of his parents many years back there had been an hour glass—of a sudden he saw the fragile and expressive instrument again, as though it were standing in front of him. Fine and noiseless the rust-red sand was running through the glass neck;

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and since it was getting low in the upper half, a speedy little vortex had been formed there.

As early as the following day, in the afternoon, he had made new progress in his obstinate baiting of the people he met—and this time he had all possible success. He walked from the Piazza of St. Mark's into the English travelling-bureau located there; and after changing some money at the cash desk, he put on the expression of a distrustful foreigner and launched his fatal question at the attendant clerk. He was a Britisher; he wore a woollen suit, and was still young, with close-set eyes, and had that characteristic stolid reliability which is so peculiarly and strikingly appealing in the tricky, nimble-witted South. He began: "No reason for alarm, sir. A regulation without any serious significance. Such measures are often taken to anticipate the unhealthy effects of the heat and the sirocco . . ." But as he raised his blue eyes, he met the stare of the foreigner, a tired and somewhat unhappy stare focused on his lips with a touch of scorn. Then the Englishman blushed. "At least," he continued in an emotional undertone, "that is the official explanation which people here are content to accept. I will admit that there is something more behind it." And then in his frank and leisurely manner he told the truth.

For several years now Indian cholera had shown a heightened tendency to spread and migrate. Hatched in the warm swamps of the Ganges delta,

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rising with the noxious breath of that luxuriant, unfit primitive world and island wilderness which is shunned by humans and where the tiger crouches in the bamboo thickets, the plague had raged continuously and with unusual strength in Hindustan, had reached eastwards to China, westward to Afghanistan and Persia, and, following the chief caravan routes, had carried its terrors to Astrachan, and even to Moscow. But while Europe was trembling lest the spectre continue its advance from there across the country, it had been transported over the sea by Syrian merchantmen, and had turned up almost simultaneously in several Mediterranean ports, had raised its head in Toulon and Malaga, had showed its mask several times in Palermo and Naples, and seemed permanently entrenched through Calabria and Apulia. The north of the peninsula had been spared. Yet in the middle of this May in Venice the frightful vibrations were found on one and the same day in the blackish wasted bodies of a cabin boy and a woman who sold greengroceries. The cases were kept secret. But within a week there were ten, twenty, thirty more, and in various sections. A man from the Austrian provinces who had made a pleasure trip to Venice for a few days, returned to his home town and died with unmistakable symptoms—and that is how the first reports of the pestilence in the lagoon city got into the German newspapers. The Venetian authorities answered that the city's health conditions had never been better, and took the most

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necessary preventive measures. But probably the food supply had been infected. Denied and glossed over, death was eating its way along the narrow streets, and its dissemination was especially favoured by the premature summer heat which made the water of the canals lukewarm. Yes, it seemed as though the plague had got renewed strength, as though the tenacity and fruitfulness of its stimuli had doubled. Cases of recovery were rare. Out of a hundred attacks, eighty were fatal, and in the most horrible manner. For the plague moved with utter savagery, and often showed that most dangerous form which is called "the drying." Water from the blood vessels collected in pockets, and the blood was unable to carry this off. Within a few hours the victim was parched, his blood became as thick as glue, and he stifled amid cramps and hoarse groans. Lucky for him if, as sometimes happened, the attack took the form of a light discomfiture followed by a profound coma from which he seldom or never awakened. At the beginning of June the pest-house of the Ospedale Civico had quietly filled; there was not much room left in the two orphan asylums, and a frightfully active commerce was kept up between the wharf of the Fondamenta Nuove and San Michele, the burial island. But there was the fear of a general drop in prosperity. The recently opened art exhibit in the public gardens was to be considered, along with the heavy losses which, in case of panic or unfavourable rumours, would threaten business, the hotels, the

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entire elaborate system for exploiting foreigners—and as these considerations evidently carried more weight than love of truth or respect for international agreements, the city authorities upheld obstinately their policy of silence, and denial. The chief health officer had resigned from his post in indignation, and been promptly replaced by a more tractable personality. The people knew this; and the corruption of their superiors, together with the predominating insecurity, the exceptional condition into which the prevalence of death had plunged the city, induced a certain demoralization of the lower classes, encouraging shady and antisocial impulses which manifested themselves in licence, profligacy, and a rising crime wave. Contrary to custom, many drunkards were seen in the evenings; it was said that at night nasty mobs made the streets unsafe. Burglaries and even murders became frequent, for it had already been proved on two occasions that persons who had presumably fallen victim to the plague had in reality been dispatched with poison by their own relatives. And professional debauchery assumed abnormal obtrusive proportions such as had never been known here before, and to an extent which is usually found only in the southern parts of the country and in the Orient.

The Englishman pronounced the final verdict on these facts. "You would do well," he concluded, "to leave to-day rather than to-morrow. It cannot be much more than a couple of days before a quarantine

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zone is declared." "Thank you," Aschenbach said, and left the office.

The square lay sunless and stifling. Unsuspecting foreigners sat in front of the cafés or stood among the pigeons in front of the church and watched the swarms of birds flapping their wings, crowding one another, and pecking at grains of corn offered them in open palms. The recluse was feverishly excited, triumphant in his possession of the truth. But it had left him with a bad taste in his mouth, and a weird horror in his heart. As he walked up and down the flagstones of the gorgeous court, he was weighing an action which would meet the situation and would absolve him. This evening after dinner he could approach the woman with the pearls and make her a speech; he had figured it out word for word: "Permit a foreigner, madam, to give you some useful advice, a warning, which is being withheld from you through self-interest. Leave immediately with Tadzio and your daughters! Venice is full of the plague." Then he could lay a farewell hand on the head of this tool of a mocking divinity, turn away, and flee this morass. But he felt at the same time that he was very far from seriously desiring such a move. He would retract it, would disengage himself from it. . . . But when we are distracted we loathe most the thought of retracing our steps. He recalled a white building, ornamented with inscriptions which glistened in the evening and in whose transparent mysticism his mind's eye had lost itself—

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and then that strange wanderer's form which had awakened in the aging man the roving hankerings of youth after the foreign and the remote. And the thought of return, the thought of prudence and soberness, effort, mastery, disgusted him to such an extent that his face was distorted with an expression of physical nausea. "It must be kept silent!" he whispered heavily. And: "I will keep silent!" The consciousness of his share in the facts and the guilt intoxicated him, much as a little wine intoxicates a tired brain. The picture of the diseased and neglected city hovering desolately before him aroused vague hopes beyond the bounds of reason, but with an egregious sweetness. What was the scant happiness he had dreamed of a moment ago, compared with these expectations? What were art and virtue worth to him, over against the advantages of chaos? He kept silent, and remained in Venice.

This same night he had a frightful dream, if one can designate as a dream a bodily and mental experience which occurred to him in the deepest sleep, completely independent of him, and with a physical realness, although he never saw himself present or moving about among the incidents; but their stage rather was his soul itself, and they broke in from without, trampling down his resistance—a profound and spiritual resistance—by sheer force; and when they had passed through, they left his substance, the culture of his lifetime, crushed and annihilated behind them.

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It began with anguish, anguish and desire, and a frightened curiosity as to what was coming. It was night, and his senses were on the watch. From far off a grumble, an uproar, was approaching, a jumble of noises. Clanking, blaring, and dull thunder, with shrill shouts and a definite whine in a long-drawn-out *u*-sound—all this was sweetly, ominously interspersed and dominated by the deep cooing of wickedly persistent flutes which charmed the bowels in a shamelessly penetrative manner. But he knew one word; it was veiled, and yet would name what was approaching: "The foreign god!" Vaporous fire began to glow; then he recognized mountains like those about his summer-house. And in the scattered light, from high up in the woods, among tree-trunks and crumbling moss-grown rocks—people, beasts, a throng, a raging mob plunged twisting and whirling downwards, and made the hill swarm with bodies, flames, tumult, and a riotous round dance. Women, tripped by overlong fur draperies which hung from their waists, were holding up tambourines and beating on them, their groaning heads flung back. Others swung sparking firebrands and bare daggers, or wore hissing snakes about the middle of their bodies, or shrieking held their breasts in their two hands. Men with horns on their foreheads, shaggy-haired, girded with hides, bent back their necks and raised their arms and thighs, clashed brass cymbals and beat furiously at kettledrums, while smooth boys prodded he-goats with wreathed sticks, climbing on their horns and fall-

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ing off with shouts when they bounded. And the bacchantes wailed the word with the soft consonants and the drawn-out *u*-sound, at once sweet and savage, like nothing ever heard before. In one place it rang out as though piped into the air by stags, and it was echoed in another by many voices, in wild triumph—with it they incited one another to dance and to fling out their arms and legs, and it was never silent. But everything was pierced and dominated by the deep coaxing flute. He who was fighting against this experience—did it not coax him too with its shameless penetration, into the feast and the excesses of the extreme sacrifice? His repugnance, his fear, were keen—he was honourably set on defending himself to the very last against the barbarian, the foe to intellectual poise and dignity. But the noise, the howling, multiplied by the resonant walls of the hills, grew, took the upper hand, swelled to a fury of rapture. Odours oppressed the senses, the pungent smell of the bucks, the scent of moist bodies, and a waft of stagnant water, with another smell, something familiar, the smell of wounds and prevalent disease. At the beating of the drum his heart fluttered, his head was spinning, he was caught in a frenzy, in a blinding deafening lewdness—and he yearned to join the ranks of the god. The obscene symbol, huge, wooden, was uncovered and raised up; then they howled the magic word with more abandon. Foaming at the mouth, they raged, teased one another with ruttish gestures and caressing hands; laughing and

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groaning, they stuck the goads into one another's flesh and licked the blood from their limbs. But the dreamer now was with them, in them, and he belonged to the foreign god. Yes, they were he himself, as they hurled themselves biting and tearing upon the animals, got entangled in steaming rags, and fell in promiscuous unions on the torn moss, in sacrifice to their god. And his soul tasted the unchastity and fury of decay.

When he awakened from the affliction of this dream he was unnerved, shattered, and hopelessly under the power of the demon. He no longer avoided the inquisitive glances of other people; he did not care if he was exciting their suspicions. And as a matter of fact they were fleeing, travelling elsewhere. Numerous bathing-houses stood empty, the occupants of the dining-hall became more and more scattered, and in the city now one rarely saw a foreigner. The truth seemed to have leaked out; the panic, despite the reticence of those whose interests were involved, seemed no longer avoidable. But the woman with the pearls remained with her family, either because the rumours had not yet reached her, or because she was too proud and fearless to heed them. Tadzio remained. And to Aschenbach, in his infatuation, it seemed at times as though flight and death might remove all the disturbing elements of life around them, and he stay here alone with the boy. Yes, by the sea in the forenoon when his eyes rested heavily, irresponsibly, unwaveringly on the thing he coveted,

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or when, as the day was ending, he followed shamelessly after him through streets where the hideous death lurked in secret—at such times the atrocious seemed to him rich in possibilities, and laws of morality had dropped away.

Like any lover, he wanted to please; and he felt a bitter anguish lest it might not be possible. He added bright youthful details to his dress, he put on jewels, and used perfumes. During the day he often spent much time over his toilet, and came to the table strikingly dressed, excited, and in suspense. In the light of the sweet youthfulness which had done this to him, he detested his aging body. The sight of his grey hair, his sharp features, plunged him into shame and hopelessness. It induced him to attempt rejuvenating his body and appearance. He often visited the hotel barber.

Beneath the barber's apron, leaning back in the chair under the gossip's expert hands, he winced to observe his reflection in the mirror.

"Grey," he said, making a wry face.

"A little," the man answered. "Due entirely to a slight neglect, an indifference to outward things, which is conceivable in people of importance, but it is not exactly praiseworthy. And all the less so since such persons are above prejudice in matters of nature or art. If the moral objections of certain people to the art of cosmetics were to be logically extended to the care of the teeth, they would give no slight offence. And after all, we are just as old as

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we feel, and under some circumstances grey hair would actually stand for more of an untruth than the despised correction. In your case, sir, you are entitled to the natural colour of your hair. Will you permit me simply to return what belongs to you?"

"How is that?" Aschenbach asked.

Then the orator washed his client's hair with two kinds of water, one clear and one dark, and it was as black as in youth. Following this, he curled it with irons into soft waves, stepped back, and eyed his work.

"All that is left now," he said, "would be to freshen up the skin a little."

And like someone who cannot finish, cannot satisfy himself, he passed with quickening energy from one manipulation to another. Aschenbach rested comfortably, incapable of resistance, or rather his hopes aroused by what was taking place. In the glass he saw his brows arch more evenly and decisively. His eyes became longer; their brilliance was heightened by a light touching-up of the lids. A little lower, where the skin had been a leatherish brown, he saw a delicate crimson tint grow beneath a deft application of colour. His lips, bloodless a little while past, became full, and as red as raspberries. The furrows in the cheeks and about the mouth, the wrinkles of the eyes, disappeared beneath lotions and cream. With a knocking heart he beheld a blossoming youth. Finally the beauty specialist declared himself content, after the manner of such people, by obsequiously

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thanking the man he had been serving. "A trifling assistance," he said, as he applied one parting touch. "Now the gentleman can fall in love unhesitatingly." He walked away, fascinated; he was happy as in a dream, timid and bewildered. His necktie was red, his broad-brimmed straw hat was trimmed with a variegated band.

A tepid storm wind had risen. It was raining sparsely and at intervals, but the air was damp, thick, and filled with the smell of things rotting. All around him he heard a fluttering, pattering, and swishing; and under the fever of his cosmetics it seemed to him as though evil wind-spirits were haunting the place, impure sea-birds which rooted and gnawed at the food of the condemned and befouled it with their droppings. For the sultriness destroyed his appetite, and the fancy suggested itself that the foods were poisoned with contaminating substances. Tracking the boy one afternoon, Aschenbach had plunged deep into the tangled centre of the diseased city. He was becoming uncertain of where he was, since the alleys, waterways, bridges, and little squares of the labyrinth were all so much alike, and he was no longer even sure of directions. He was absorbed with the problem of keeping the pursued figure in sight. And, driven to disgraceful subterfuges, flattening himself against walls, hiding behind the backs of other people, for a long time he did not notice the weariness, the exhaustion, with which emotion and the continual suspense had taxed his mind and his

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body. Tadzio walked behind his companions. He always allowed the governess and the nunlike sisters to precede him in the narrow places; and, loitering behind alone, he would turn his head occasionally to look over his shoulder and make sure by a glance of his peculiarly dark-grey eyes that his admirer was following. He saw him, and did not betray him. Drunk with the knowledge of this, lured forward by those eyes, led meekly by his passion, the lover stole after his unseemly hope—but finally he was cheated and lost sight of him. The Poles had crossed a short arching bridge; the height of the curve hid them from the pursuer, and when he himself had arrived there he no longer saw them. He hunted for them vainly in three directions, straight ahead and to either side along the narrow dirty wharf. In the end he was so tired and unnerved that he had to give up the search.

His head was on fire, his body was covered with a sticky sweat, his knees trembled. He could no longer endure the thirst that was torturing him, and he looked around for some immediate relief. From a little vegetable store he bought some fruit—strawberries, soft and overly ripe—and he ate them as he walked. A very charming, forsaken little square opened up before him. He recognized it; here he had made his frustrated plans for flight weeks ago. He let himself sink down on the steps of the cistern in the middle of the square, and laid his head against the stone cylinder. It was quiet; grass was growing

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up through the pavement; refuse was scattered about. Among the weather-beaten, unusually tall houses surrounding him there was one like a palace, with little lion-covered balconies, and Gothic windows with blank emptiness behind them. On the ground floor of another house was a drug store. Warm gusts of wind occasionally carried the smell of carbolic acid.

He sat there, he, the master, the artist of dignity, the author of "The Wretch," a work which had, in such accurate symbols, renounced vagabondage and the depths of misery, had denied all sympathy with the engulfed, and had cast out the outcast; the man who had arrived and, victor over his own knowledge, had outgrown all irony and acclimatized himself to the obligations of public confidence; whose reputation was official, whose name had been knighted, and on whose style boys were urged to pattern themselves—he sat there. His eyelids were shut; only now and then a mocking uneasy side-glance slipped out from beneath them. And his loose lips, set off by the cosmetics, formed isolated words of the strange dream-logic created by his half-slumbering brain.

"For beauty, Phædrus, mark me, beauty alone is both divine and visible at once; and thus it is the road of the sensuous; it is, little Phædrus, the road of the artist to the spiritual. But do you now believe, my dear, that they can ever attain wisdom and true human dignity for whom the road to the spiritual leads through the senses? Or do you believe rather (I leave the choice to you) that this is a pleasant but

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perilous road, a really wrong and sinful road, which necessarily leads astray? For you must know that we poets cannot take the road of beauty without having Eros join us and set himself up as our leader. Indeed, we may even be heroes after our fashion, and hardened warriors, though we be like women, for passion is our exaltation, and our desire must remain love—that is our pleasure and our disgrace. You now see, do you not, that we poets cannot be wise and dignified? That we necessarily go astray, necessarily remain lascivious, and adventurers in emotion? The mastery of our style is all lies and foolishness, our renown and honour are a farce, the confidence of the masses in us is highly ridiculous, and the training of the public and of youth through art is a precarious undertaking which should be forbidden. For how, indeed, could he be a fit instructor who is born with a natural leaning towards the precipice? We might well disavow it and reach after dignity, but wherever we turn it attracts us. Let us, say, renounce the dissolvent of knowledge, since knowledge, Phædrus, has no dignity or strength. It is aware, it understands and pardons, but without reserve and form. It feels sympathy with the precipice, it is the precipice. This, then, we abandon with firmness, and from now on our efforts matter only by their yield of beauty, or, in other words, simplicity, greatness, and new rigour, form, and a second type of openness. But form and openness, Phædrus, lead to intoxication and to desire, lead the noble perhaps

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into sinister revels of emotion which his own beautiful rigour rejects as infamous, lead to the precipice—yes, they too lead to the precipice. They lead us poets there, I say, since we cannot force ourselves, since we can merely let ourselves out. And now I am going, Phædrus. You stay here; and when you no longer see me, then you go too.”

A few days later, as Gustav von Aschenbach was not feeling well, he left the beach hotel at a later hour in the morning than usual. He had to fight against certain attacks of vertigo which were only partially physical and were accompanied by a pronounced malaise, a feeling of bafflement and hopelessness—while he was not certain whether this had to do with conditions outside him or with his own nature. In the lobby he noticed a large pile of luggage ready for shipment; he asked the door-keeper who it was that was leaving, and heard in answer the Polish title which he had learned secretly. He accepted this without any alteration of his sunken features, with that curt elevation of the head by which one acknowledges something he does not need to know. Then he asked: “When?” The answer was: “After lunch.” He nodded, and went to the beach.

It was not very inviting. Rippling patches of rain retreated across the wide flat water separating the beach from the first long sand-bank. An air of autumn, of things past their prime, seemed to lie over the pleasure spot which had once been so alive with

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colour and was now almost abandoned. The sand was no longer kept clean. A camera, seemingly without an owner, stood on its tripod by the edge of the sea; and a black cloth thrown over it was flapping noisily in the wind.

Tadzio, with the three or four companions still left, was moving about to the right in front of his family's cabin. And midway between the sea and the row of bathing-houses, lying back in his chair with a robe over his knees, Aschenbach looked at him once more. The game, which was not being supervised since the women were probably occupied with preparations for the journey, seemed to have no rules, and it was degenerating. The stocky boy with the sleek black hair who was called Jaschu had been angered and blinded by sand flung in his face. He forced Tadzio into a wrestling-match which quickly ended in the fall of the beauty, who was weaker. But as though, in the hour of parting, the servile feelings of the inferior had turned to merciless brutality and were trying to get vengeance for a long period of slavery, the victor did not let go of the boy underneath, but knelt on his back and pressed his face so persistently into the sand that Tadzio, already breathless from the struggle, was in danger of strangling. His attempts to shake off the weight were fitful; for moments they stopped entirely and were resumed again as mere twitchings. Enraged, Aschenbach was about to spring to the rescue, when the torturer finally released his victim. Tadzio, very pale, raised himself half-

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way and sat motionless for several minutes, resting on one arm, with rumpled hair and glowering eyes. Then he stood up completely, and moved slowly away. They called him, cheerfully at first, then anxiously and imploringly; he did not listen. The swarthy boy, who seemed to regret his excesses immediately afterwards, caught up with him and tried to placate him. A movement of the shoulder put him at his distance. Tazio went down obliquely to the water. He was barefoot, and wore his striped linen suit with the red bow.

He lingered on the edge of the water with his head down, drawing figures in the wet sand with one toe; then he went into the shallows, which did not cover his knees in the deepest place, crossed them leisurely, and arrived at the sand-bank. He stood there a moment, his face turned to the open sea; soon after, he began stepping slowly to the left along the narrow stretch of exposed ground. Separated from the mainland by the expanse of water, separated from his companions by a proud moodiness, he moved along, a strongly isolated and unrelated figure with fluttering hair—placed out there in the sea, the wind, against the vague mists. He stopped once more to look around. And suddenly, as though at some recollection, some impulse, with one hand on his hip he turned the upper part of his body in a beautiful twist which began from the base—and he looked over his shoulder towards the shore. The watcher sat there, as he had sat once before when for the first time

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these twilight-grey eyes had turned at the doorway and met his own. His head, against the back of the chair, had slowly followed the movements of the boy walking yonder. Now, simultaneously with this glance it rose and sank on his breast, so that his eyes looked out from underneath, while his face took on the loose, inwardly relaxed expression of deep sleep. But it seemed to him as though the pale and lovely lure out there were smiling to him, nodding to him; as though, removing his hand from his hip, he were signalling to come out, were vaguely guiding towards egregious promises. And, as often before, he stood up to follow him.

Some minutes passed before anyone hurried to the aid of the man who had collapsed into one corner of his chair. He was brought to his room. And on the same day a respectfully shocked world received the news of his death.

TRISTAN

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I

So this is the Einfried Sanatorium! White and rectilinear, with its expanse of main buildings and side wings, it lies in the centre of a broad park that is delightfully fitted out with grottoes, arbours, and pavilions made of bark. And above and beyond the slate roofs, the hills rise bulkily against the sky. They are green with pines, and gently irregular.

This institution is still run by Dr. Leander. With his black, double-pointed beard, which is as coarse and matted as the horsehair used for stuffing furniture, with his thick, glistening spectacles and his air of having been chilled by science, hardened, and filled with a subdued, cautious pessimism—with all this he maintains a forceful and conclusive jurisdiction over his patients. His patients—items that were too weak to make laws for themselves and keep them, but had given themselves completely over to him that they might gain support from his rigidity.

As to Fräulein von Osterloh—she functions with an unwearying devotion as housekeeper. Great heavens! how urgently she keeps on rushing upstairs and

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downstairs, from one end of the institute to the other! She has charge of the kitchen and the store-room, goes through the wash, gives orders to the servants, and sets the table of the establishment from the stand-points of economy, health, tastiness, and of the outward appearance of things. She manages with an agitated meticulousness; and in her excessive industry there lies concealed a steady reproach for the whole world of men, since it has not yet occurred to any one of them to take her with him. But in two round crimson spots, the unextinguishable hope glows on her cheeks of ultimately becoming the wife of Dr. Leander. . . .

Ozone, and quiet, quiet air . . . in spite of anything Dr. Leander's detractors and rivals may say to the contrary, Einfried is to be most warmly recommended for consumptives. But there are not only tubercular patients here; there are all sorts of inmates, men, women, and even children. Dr. Leander has results to offer in any number of fields. There are people here with stomach-trouble, as, for instance, the wife of Magistrate Spatz, who in addition has something wrong with her ears. There are gentlemen with bad hearts, paralytics, sufferers from rheumatism and all stages of nervous disorder. One diabetic general is consuming his pension here with a ceaseless grumbling. Several men with fleshless faces jerk their legs about in an uncontrolled manner which by no means augurs well. One woman of fifty, the wife of a Pastor Höhlenrauch, has brought

nineteen children into the world and is completely out of her head; still, she has no peace, but has been wandering miserably and aimlessly through the whole house for a year now, resting silent and staring on the arm of her private nurse, and driven by vague unrest.

There is an occasional death among the "serious cases," who lie in their rooms and do not make their appearance either at meal-times or in the drawing-room . . . and no one, not even the occupant of the adjoining room, is aware of it. The waxen guest is removed in the dead of night, and the activities of Einfried continue undisturbed: the rub-downs, the electric treatments, the injections, the showers, baths, exercises, sweating, deep breathing, all in different places and with the most up-to-date equipment.

Yes, everything is full of life, even here. The institute is in bloom. At the entrance to the side wing, the porter sounds the large bell when new guests arrive. Dr. Leander, together with Fräulein von Osterloh, accompanies in all formality to their cabs those who are leaving. Just what kind of creature has not put up at Einfried! There is even an author here, an eccentric man, who bears the name of some mineral or jewel, and is stealing days from the Lord God. . . .

Furthermore, besides Dr. Leander, there is a second physician, for the minor cases and the hopeless ones. But his name is Müller, and he is really not worth mentioning.

II

In the beginning of January the wholesale merchant Klöterjahn—of the firm A. C. Klöterjahn & Co.—brought his wife to Einfried; and Fräulein von Osterloh received them after their long journey in the reception-room on the ground floor, which was fitted out in a marvellously pure Empire style like nearly all of the distinctive old house. Almost immediately Dr. Leander also appeared; he bowed, and a conversation was begun, in the course of which both parties came to an understanding.

Outside, out in the winter, was the park with its covered flower-beds, its snowed-up grottoes, and lonely little temples. And two servants were bringing in the trunks of the new guest from the cab which stood in the street in front of the big iron door—since there was no approach up to the house.

“Slowly, Gabriele, take care, my angel, and keep your mouth closed,” Herr Klöterjahn had said as he helped his wife through the park; and whoever saw them could not help being deeply moved by this *take care*—which was spoken in English—even though it cannot be denied that Herr Klöterjahn might have said it in plain, simple German.

The driver who had brought them from the station to the sanatorium, a crude, ignorant man without any of the finer feelings, had bitten his tongue in powerless caution while the wholesale merchant was help-

ing his wife to descend; yes, it even seemed as though these two sturdy bays, shivering in the silent cold and with their eyes rolled back, were following the anxious procedure with suspense, full of misgiving for so much frail gracefulness and such tender charm.

The young woman was suffering with her trachea, as it had been expressly stated in the first letter which Herr Klöterjahn had sent to the head physician of Ein-fried from the shore of the Baltic—and, thank God, it was not her lungs! But even if it had been her lungs, this new patient could not have had a sweeter or a nobler look, could not have appeared more removed or incorporeal, than now. Close by her robust husband, she followed the conversation, lying back faint and weary in the white lacquered arm-chair, with its strong straight lines.

Her lovely pale hands, entirely bare except for a slender wedding-ring, were lying in her lap, in the folds of a dark heavy woollen coat. And she wore a tight-fitting silver-grey shirt-waist, with a close high collar covered with velvet embroidery. But these warm, heavy stuffs only made the unutterable weariness of her little head seem all the more appealing. Her light brown hair was gathered low in the back; it was combed smooth; and only near the right temple one stray curling strand fell across her forehead, not far from the place over her distinctly traced eyebrow where a peculiar tiny vein, pale blue and sickly, branched across the clearness and purity of an almost transparent forehead. This little blue vein over the

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one eye commanded in a disturbing fashion the whole fine oval of her face. It protruded more noticeably as soon as the woman began to speak, and gave an effect of exertion to her face, or even of distress, awakening uncertain apprehensions. Nevertheless, she spoke, and smiled. She spoke easily and amiably in a lightly veiled voice, and she smiled with her somewhat listless eyes. Yes, now and then they showed the least inclination to bulge, and the corners, on either side of the narrow bridge of her nose, lay in a deep shadow. Her beautiful wide mouth was pale, and yet it seemed brilliant, owing to the fact, perhaps, that her lips were demarcated with such exceptional sharpness and clarity. She would cough occasionally. At such times she put her handkerchief to her lips and examined it afterwards.

"Don't cough, Gabriele," Herr Klöterjahn said. "You know how Dr. Hinzpeter back home warned you especially against it, *darling*, and all you have to do is just hold back, my angel. As I said," he repeated, "it is the trachea. When it began, I really thought it was the lungs, and God knows I was frightened. But it wasn't the lungs, nah, not on your life; we don't fall for anything like that, eh, Gabriele? He, he!"

"Beyond a doubt," Dr. Leander said, and glistened on them with his glasses.

Whereupon Herr Klöterjahn requested coffee, coffee and rolls—and he had such a vivid way of pronouncing it half swallowed, that you couldn't help feeling an appetite.

He got what he wanted, got also rooms for himself and his wife, and they installed themselves.

Furthermore, Dr. Leander took over the case himself, without consulting Dr. Müller.

III

The new patient created an unusual stir in Einfried, and Herr Klöterjahn, who was accustomed to such successes, accepted with satisfaction every respect that was paid her. The diabetic general stopped grumbling for a moment the first time he saw her; the gentlemen with the fleshless faces smiled, and attempted desperately to control their legs when they were near her; and the Magistratsrätin Spatz immediately attached herself as an elder friend. Indeed, she made quite an impression, this woman who bore Herr Klöterjahn's name! An author who had been spending his time in Einfried for some weeks now, a distant sort—his name sounded like the name of some jewel—coloured noticeably as she passed him in the corridor; he stood still as though rooted there, even after she had disappeared.

Within two days everyone in the sanatorium knew her history. She was born in Bremen, a fact, moreover, which was plainly noticeable in certain winning quirks to her pronunciation. Two years before, she had given the wholesale merchant Klöterjahn her consent for life. She went with him to his home town, along the Baltic, and about ten months ago,

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under the most unusually difficult and dangerous circumstances, she had presented him with a child, a marvellously vigorous and well set-up son and heir. But since those dreadful days she had never regained her strength, if it could be said that she ever did have much strength. Exceptionally exhausted and exceptionally impoverished of all physical resistance, she had scarcely left her bed when she developed a cough which brought up a little blood. Oh, not much—an insignificant little speck of blood; but it would have been much preferable if it had not happened at all, while the disquieting thing was that after a short time the same slight but troublesome incident was repeated. Now, there were remedies for all this, and Dr. Hinzpeter, the family physician, made use of them. A complete rest was prescribed, there was cracked ice to be swallowed, morphine was brought to bear against the tickling sensation which made her cough, and the heart was steadied as far as possible. But recovery refused to set in, and the young mother seemed to be consuming in a mild and silent glow while Anton Klöterjahn, Jr., a master-piece of a baby, asserted and maintained his station in life with a frightful emphasis and lack of consideration. . . . As has been said before, it was the trachea, a word which, in Dr. Hinzpeter's mouth, exercised an astonishingly consoling, reassuring, and almost hilarious effect on everyone. But although it was not the lungs, the doctor had eventually thought it highly advisable, in ac-

celerating her convalescence, to try the influence of a milder climate and of a few months in some regular institute. The reputation of Einfried and its director had done the rest.

That was the way things stood; and Herr Klöterjahn in person told it to everyone who manifested the least interest. He spoke in a loud boisterous manner, and with the good humour of a man whose digestion is in as perfect order as his purse—with vastly explosive movements of his lips, in the broad, yet rapid fashion of people along the north coast. Many of his words were hurled out, so that each sound came like a discharge; and he would laugh about it as an excellent joke.

He was of medium height, broad, strong, and short-legged, and possessed a full red face with water-blue eyes shaded by light blond lashes, large nostrils and moist lips. He had English side-whiskers, wore English clothing, and was enchanted to find at Einfried an English family, father, mother, and three pretty children with their nurse, who were stopping here for the simple reason that they did not know where else to stop; he ate an English breakfast with them every morning. He was especially fond of his food and drink, displayed himself as a true connoisseur of both the cuisine and the wine cellar, and entertained the company most rousingly with accounts of the dinners which were given back home among his own circle, and with descriptions of certain choice dishes

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which were unknown here. At such times his eyes would squint with a kindly expression and his speech contained some palatal and nasal element, to an accompaniment of soft smacking noises deep in his gullet. As evidence that he was not fundamentally inimical to other earthly enjoyments, there was the evening when a patient at Einfried, an author by profession, came upon him in one of the corridors joking with a chambermaid in a somewhat inappropriate manner—a trifling bit of sport which caused the author concerned to show a most ridiculous expression of disgust.

As to Herr Klöterjahn's wife, it was more than plain that she was attached to him with all her heart. She followed his words and motions with a smile; not with the complacent forbearance which most sufferers display towards the healthy, but with that lovable pleasure and sympathy which in rare instances good-natured invalids feel towards the confident manifestations of vitality by people who are perfectly at home in their skins.

Herr Klöterjahn did not stay long at Einfried. He had brought his wife here; but now that a week had passed, and he knew her to be comfortable and in good hands, he could stay no longer. Duties of equal importance, his thriving child, and his equally thriving business, called him back home. They compelled him to leave, with his wife entrusted to the best of care.

IV

Spinell was the name of the author who had been staying in Einfried for some weeks; Detlev Spinell was his name, and his exterior was remarkable.

Imagine a dark-haired man in his early thirties, quite tall, his hair already noticeably grey about the temples, and with a round, pale, somewhat puffy face which showed not the least trace of a beard. It was not shaved—one could tell; but it was soft and child-like, with a faint down showing here and there. This gave him a quite noteworthy appearance. His eyes had a soft expression about them, were somewhat staring, and of the colour of a deer. His nose was small, but a wee bit fleshy. In addition, Herr Spinell possessed the arched porous upper lip of a Roman, carious teeth, and feet of unusual length. One of the gentlemen with the uncontrollable legs, who was a bit of a cynic and a wit, had dubbed him behind his back “the decrepit baby.” But that was nasty, and not at all to the point. He wore good fashionable clothes, went about in a long black coat and a vest with coloured dots.

He was unsociable, and found nothing in common with a single soul there. It was only once in a great while that an engaging, amiable, and overflowing mood came upon him; and this always happened when Herr Spinell was under some æsthetic urgency, when

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the sight of something beautiful or other, the composition of two colours, a nobly formed vase, or the mountains in the sunset, surprised him into open admiration. "How beautiful!" he would say at such times, laying his head to one side and raising his shoulders while he opened his hands and twisted his nose and lips. "God, just look, how beautiful!" And under the emotion of such a moment he was capable of throwing his arms blindly about the neck of the most distinguished person, whether man or woman.

There always lay on his table, visible to anyone who entered his room, the book which he had written. It was a moderate-sized novel, provided with a thoroughly amazing cover and printed on a sort of filter paper for coffee. As to the type, each letter looked like a Gothic cathedral. Fräulein von Osterloh had read it in an idle hour, and found it "refined," which was her way of passing judgment of "godlessly boring." Everything happened in worldly *salons*, in luxurious boudoirs, full of grotesques, antique furniture, expensive porcelains, invaluable fabrics, and artistic ornaments of all sorts. The most loving emphasis was laid upon the descriptions of such things; and through it you could always see Herr Spinell, with his nose twisted, saying: "How beautiful!" . . . Furthermore, it could not help seeming queer that he had written no other books besides this one, since he still seemed to be writing with passion. He spent the major portion of the day in his room writing, and mailed an extraordinary number of letters, almost

always one or two daily. Although it was very strange and amusing how seldom he received a letter in return. . . .

V

Herr Spinell sat opposite Herr Klöterjahn's wife at the table. The first meal they all ate together, he appeared a bit late in the large dining-hall on the ground floor of the side wing, spoke in a weak voice to everyone in general, and took his place—whereupon Dr. Leander introduced him to the new-comers without much ceremony. He bowed, and then began eating in a visibly embarrassed manner, manipulating his knife and fork somewhat affectedly in large, white, beautifully formed hands which came out of two narrow sleeves. Gradually he came to feel more at ease, and cast calm side-long glances at Herr Klöterjahn and his wife. Also, in the course of the meal, Herr Klöterjahn offered a few questions and remarks about the situation and climate of Einfried; his wife dropped in a word here and there in her catching way, and Herr Spinell answered politely. His voice was soft and quite pleasant; but he had a somewhat impeded and sipping manner of talking, as though his teeth were in the way of his tongue.

After dinner, when everyone had gone into the drawing-room, and Dr. Leander came to pay his compliments to the new guests in particular, Herr Klöter-

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jahn's wife inquired about the person who had sat opposite them.

"What is the gentleman's name?" she asked. "Spinelli? I did not catch the name."

"Spinell, not Spinelli, Madam. No, he is not an Italian, but was merely born in Lemberg, so far as I know . . ."

"And did you say he was a writer? Or just what?" Herr Klöterjahn asked. He had his hands deep in the pockets of his comfortable English trousers, leaned one ear to the doctor, and, as is the case with a good many people, opened his mouth to listen.

"Indeed, I don't just know . . . he writes . . ." Dr. Leander answered. "He has, I believe, published a book, a kind of novel, but I really don't know anything . . ."

This repeated "don't know" indicated that Dr. Leander didn't take much stock in the writer, and declined all responsibility for him.

"But that is certainly very interesting!" Herr Klöterjahn's wife put in. She had never before seen an author face to face.

"Oh, yes," Dr. Leander answered accommodat-ingly. "He is supposed to have a certain amount of reputation . . ." Whereupon nothing more was said about the author.

But a little later, after the new guests had retired and Dr. Leander was about to leave the drawing-room, Herr Spinell intercepted him and made inquiries on his part also.

"What is the name of these two?" he asked. "Of course, I didn't quite catch it."

"Klötterjahn," Dr. Leander answered, and went on his way.

"*What* is the man's name?"

"Their name is Klötterjahn!" and Dr. Leander was gone. He took no stock at all in this author.

VI

Had we not reached the place where Herr Klötterjahn had gone back home? Indeed, he was again on the Baltic, with his business and his child, this inconsiderate and lively little creature which had cost his mother so many pains and a slight defect in the trachea. But as for her, the young wife, she stayed on at Einfried, and the Magistratsrätin Spatz attached herself to her as an elder friend. But that did not keep Herr Klötterjahn's wife from mixing agreeably with the other patients. As, for instance, with Herr Spinell, who, to the astonishment of all—for up to now he had had nothing in common with a single soul there—had showed towards her from the very start an extraordinary amount of consideration and devotion, and with whom she enjoyed chatting in the free hours left her by a strenuous schedule.

He approached her with an immeasurable amount of caution and reverence, and would only speak to her in a carefully suppressed voice, so that the Rätin Spatz who had trouble with her ears, could scarcely

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understand a word he said. He would tiptoe with his large feet up to the chair where Herr Klöterjahn's wife was leaning back frail and smiling. Then he would stop about two steps off, keep one leg behind the other, bend the upper part of his body, and talk in his impeded, somewhat sipping manner. He was quite urgent, but ready at any moment to retreat and disappear in haste as soon as the least sign of weariness or satiety might be noticeable on her face. But he did not weary her. She would press him to be seated near the Rätin and herself; then she would ask him some question or other, and listen to him smiling and engrossed. For quite frequently he would drop into a delightful and unusual vein, such as she had never met with before.

"Just why are you at Einfried?" she asked. "What sort of cure are you taking, Herr Spinell?"

"Cure? . . . I take a bit of the electric treatment. But not to speak of. I will tell you frankly why I am here. . . . On account of the period."

"Ah!" said Herr Klöterjahn's wife, supporting her chin in her hand and turning towards him with the exaggerated eagerness one puts on for children who are about to tell something.

"Oh, yes. Einfried is entirely Empire; it used to be a castle, a summer home, I am told. This side wing is a recent annex, but the main building is old and genuine. Now there are times when I simply can't live without Empire, when it is inevitably necessary to my well-being. It is plain that you must

feel one way when among furniture which is soft and comfortable even to the extent of the lascivious, and feel another way among such tables, chairs, and drapes as these, with their marked straight lines. This brightness and strength, this cold crass simplicity and its reserve of vigour, lends me bearing and dignity, if you will; it produces an inner purging and renovation, and without a doubt it is uplifting. . . .”

“Yes, that is remarkable,” she said. “And I can understand you, with a little effort.”

Then he answered that it was not worth the effort, so that they both laughed together. The Rätin Spatz laughed too, and found it remarkable; but she didn’t claim to understand him.

The drawing-room was large and attractive. The high white folding doors of the billiard-room stood wide open; here the gentlemen with the uncontrollable legs and several others were amusing themselves. To the other side, a glass door afforded a prospect of the broad terrace and garden. In one corner there was a piano. There was also a card table at hand, covered with green felt. Here and there a woman was reading or doing fancy work. The heating was provided by an iron stove, although it was pleasant to sit and talk in front of the unused fire-place, with its imitation coal and flames made of painted paper. “You are an early riser, Herr Spinell,” said Herr Klöterjahn’s wife. “Two or three times I have happened to see you leaving the house around half past seven in the morning.”

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"An early riser? But with reservations, to be sure. The fact is that I get up early because I am really a sleepy-head."

"But you must explain that, Herr Spinell!" The Rätin Spatz also wanted to have it explained.

"Well . . . if you are an early riser, it doesn't seem necessary to me that you should get up that early. But our conscience . . . it is an awful problem, this conscience! I and those of my ilk spend all their time in a struggle with their own lives, and they are kept more than busy trying to deceive life here and there and to procure for it a sly little bit of self-complacency. We are useless creatures, I and those of my ilk, and with the exception of a good hour now and then we are burdened to death with the knowledge of our uselessness. We detest the useful, we know that it is common and unlovely, and we defend this truth the way one defends only a truth which is inevitably necessary to him. And yet we are so gnawed at by a bad conscience that there isn't a healthy spot left on us. Add to this the fact that the very nature of our inner existence, our attitude towards life, our method of work, has a horribly unwholesome, undermining, and irritable effect on us, which makes the case that much the worse. But there are slight palliatives, without which it would all be unbearable. A certain selectness and hygienic rigour in the manner of our living, for instance, is needed with many of us. To rise early, uncannily early, a cold bath and a walk through the snow . . .

perhaps that will make us contented with ourselves for a whole hour. Believe me, if I did as I wanted, I should lie in bed until afternoon. So you see, my early rising is pure hypocrisy."

"Why, no, Herr Spinell! I should call it self-mastery. . . . Shouldn't you, Frau Rätin?" And, sure enough, the Rätin Spatz also called it self-mastery.

"Hypocrisy or self-mastery! It is a choice between one word and the other. But I happen to be so broodingly honest that I . . ."

"That is just it: you brood too much."

"Yes, I brood too much."

The good weather continued. The hills, the house and park, the entire locality, lay out in a flat pure white with blinding brilliance and bluish shadows. There was no wind, and the air was only moderately chilly. A delicate blue sky curved spotless above the entire scene, with myriads of tiny flaming torches, a dance of glistening crystals. At this time Herr Klöterjahn's wife was doing reasonably well. She had no fever, her cough was almost entirely gone, and she ate without forcing herself to it. According to her instructions, she would often sit out for hours at a time on the sunny terrace. She would sit in the snow, all bundled up in covers and furs, and breathe in unquestioningly the pure iron air, which was to improve her trachea. Then at times she would notice Herr Spinell going about the park. He would be just as warmly clad, and in fur

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shoes which gave his feet a fantastic size. He walked through the snow with a tentative step and a certain careful, stiffly gracile position to his arms, and, when he reached the terrace, would greet her politely and climb the steps below her to begin a conversation.

"To-day, on my morning walk, I saw a beautiful woman . . . God, she was beautiful!" And he laid his head to one side, and opened his hands.

"Indeed, Herr Spinell? But you must describe her to me!"

"No, that is impossible. For I should give you an unjust picture of her. I caught the woman in passing, with just half a glance; I didn't really see her. But the effaced shadow of her that I received was enough to start me going and to let me carry away a picture that is beautiful . . . God, it is beautiful!"

She laughed. "Is that your way of observing beautiful women, Herr Spinell?"

"Yes, and it is a better way than if I stared like some crude reality-monger into their faces and carried away the impression of a miserable collection of facts . . ."

"Reality-monger . . . That is a queer word! A genuine author's word, Herr Spinell! But it appeals to me, if I may say so. There is so much in it which I understand somewhat, something free and independent which is a challenge to our servitude to the actual . . . although it is nevertheless the most re-

spectable thing imaginable, the very soul of respectability. . . . And then, I understand that there is something beyond the tangible, something more tender . . .”

“I know of only one face,” he began suddenly, with an unusually happy note in his voice, raising his clenched hands to his shoulders and letting an exalted smile expose his large teeth; “I know of only one face where it would be a crime for me to think of correcting the noble reality with imagination . . . one face which I should be content to gaze at, to dwell upon, not minutes, not hours, but my entire life . . . to lose myself in it, and be made to forget everything of this earth . . .”

“Yes, yes, Herr Spinell! The only thing is that Fräulein von Osterloh has somewhat disagreeable ears.”

He said nothing, bowing deeply. As he stood erect again, his eyes rested with an expression of embarrassment and anguish on the peculiar little vein which branched pale blue and sickly across the clarity of her almost transparent forehead.

VII

Really, a quite remarkable sort! Herr Klötterjahn’s wife would think about him now and then, since she had a good deal of time for thinking. Whether it was that the change of air was beginning to lose its effect, or that some actually harmful influence was as-

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serting itself, the condition of her trachea would certainly have been better; she became weak, tired, without much appetite, and occasionally had a fever. Dr. Leander was most emphatic in insisting that she remain quiet, take plenty of rest, and be very careful of herself. So that when she did not have to be lying down, she would sit quietly near the Rätin Spatz, with some needlework forgotten in her lap, and thinking of something or other.

Yes, he had set her to thinking . . . this strange Herr Spinell. But the remarkable thing was that she didn't think so much of him as of herself. Somehow or other, he had created in her an unusual curiosity, an interest she had never felt before, in her own person.

One day, in the course of a conversation, he had said: "No, they are puzzling things, women are. Old as the question is, you can't help considering it in astonishment. Some wonderful creature, a nymph, a vision, a being out of some fairy dream. And what does she do? Goes off and surrenders herself to some champion at a county fair, or some butcher's boy. She comes along on his arm, perhaps even leans her head against his shoulder, and looks about her with a sly smile, as if to say: 'Now then, you can go break your hearts about it!' And we do go and break our hearts."

While he was saying this, Herr Klöterjahn's wife had been very occupied.

Another day, to the great astonishment of the Rätin

Spatz, the following dialogue took place between them:

"I wonder if I might dare to ask you—although it is very impertinent—what your name is, your true name?"

"Why, my name is Klöterjahn, Herr Spinell!"

"Hm. I knew that. Or rather, I challenge it. For, of course, I mean your real name, your maiden-name. You will be fair enough to grant me, I hope, that anyone who would address you as 'Frau Klöterjahn' would deserve to be thrashed."

She laughed so heartily that the tiny blue vein over her eyebrow stood out with painful clarity, and gave her sweet, tender face an expression of effort and fatigue which was deeply disquieting.

"No! Surely not, Herr Spinell. To be thrashed? Does 'Klöterjahn' seem so awful to you?"

"Yes, I have hated this name from the bottom of my heart from the moment I first heard it. It is farcical, and frightfully homely; and it would be cruel and abject if one were to carry the accepted usage so far as to apply your husband's name to you."

"Well, and 'Eckhof'? Is 'Eckhof' better? My father's name is 'Eckhof.' "

"Ah, just see! 'Eckhof' is something quite different. 'Eckhof' is even the name of a great actor. 'Eckhof' is proper. . . . You mention only your father. Your mother, then, could she . . ."

"Yes, my mother died when I was still quite young."

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"Ah. But tell me more about yourself, may I ask? But not if it tires you. If it tires you, you must rest, and I will go on telling you about Paris. But you could speak softly, yes, even if you whisper . . . that would only make everything the lovelier. . . . You were born in Bremen?" He put this question almost inaudibly, with an expression of worship and significance, as though there were no other city in the world like Bremen; as though Bremen were a city full of unmentionable adventures and speechless beauties, and to be born there gave one a vague majesty.

"Yes, just think!" she said involuntarily. "I come from Bremen."

"I was there once," he remarked thoughtfully.

"Great heavens, you were *there*, too! Herr Spinnell, I believe you have seen everything from Tunis to Spitzbergen!"

"Yes, I was there once," he repeated. "A few short hours in the evening. I remember an old, narrow street, with a strange moon lying straight above the roofs of the houses. Then I was in a Rathskeller that smelt of wine and must. It is an insistent memory . . ."

"Indeed? Just where could that have been? . . . Yes, I was born in just such a one of those dark, gabled houses . . . in the home of one of the old merchant families, with its reverberating halls and white lacquered portico."

"Then your father is a merchant?" he asked a bit falteringly.

"Yes. But besides that, and first of all, he is an artist."

"Ah! Ah! And to what extent?"

"He plays the violin. But that does not mean much. It is the way he plays it, Herr Spinell, that is important! I have never been able to hear certain notes without feeling the tears burn marvellously in my eyes . . . it is something that I experience in no other way. But you do not believe . . ."

"I do believe! Ah, as if I could doubt! But tell me: your family is quite old? Many generations have already lived, worked, and died in that dark, gabled house?"

"Yes. But why do you ask that?"

"Because it often happens that a race with dry, practical *bourgeois* traditions finds itself again toward the end of its days in art."

"Is that the case? . . . Yes, as to my father, he is certainly more of an artist than many a man who calls himself an artist and lives on his reputation as an artist. I just play the piano a bit. Now I am not permitted to play, but then, at home, I used to play. My father and I . . . we played together. Yes, all those years are dear to me. Especially the garden, our garden, to the rear of the house. It was wretchedly grown up in weeds, and surrounded by mossy, crumbling walls; but that was what gave it its charm.

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There was a spring in the middle, with a thick wreath of irises about it. In the summer I used to spend long hours there with my girl friends. We all sat around the spring on little camp-stools . . .”

“How beautiful!” Herr Spinell said, raising his shoulders. “Would you sit there and sing?”

“No, we sewed.”

“Always . . . always that . . .”

“Yes, we sewed and chatted, my six girl friends and I . . .”

“How beautiful! God, just listen, how beautiful!” exclaimed Herr Spinell, and his face was distorted with his enthusiasm.

“What do you find so especially beautiful in *that*, Herr Spinell?”

“Only this: that there were six beside you, that you were not included in this number, but stood out from the rest like a queen. You were distinguished from your six friends. A little golden crown, quite faint, but significant, shone in your hair . . .”

“No, nonsense, no sort of crown . . .”

“Still, it was shining secretly. I should have seen it, should have seen it plainly in your hair, if I had been hidden in the bushes at one of those times . . .”

“God only knows what you might have seen. But you weren’t hidden there, although one day it was my present husband who stepped out of the bushes accompanied by my father. I am afraid they had overheard a good deal too much of our chatter . . .”

"Then that was the place you first met your husband?"

"Yes, I met him there for the first time!" she said loudly and cheerfully; and as she smiled, the tiny, pale-blue vein stood out, strained and peculiar. "He had come to see my father on business, you see. The next day he was invited to dinner, and three days later he asked to marry me."

"Indeed! And it all happened with such extraordinary swiftness?"

"Yes. . . . Or rather, from then on, things went a little slower. For you must know that my father was not entirely willing at first, and conditioned quite a long delay. In the first place, he wanted to keep me with him, and he had still other reasons. But . . ."

"But?"

"But I *wanted* it to happen," she said with a smile, and again the little light-blue vein gave her face a distressed and sickly appearance.

"Ah, you wanted it to happen."

"Yes, and I showed a decently steady determination, as you see . . ."

"As I see. Yes."

". . . So that my father finally had to give in."

"And then you left him and his violin, left the old house, the luxuriant garden, the spring and your six girl friends, and went your way with Herr Klöterjahn."

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"And went my way. . . . You have a strange manner of expressing yourself, Herr Spinell! Almost biblical! Yes, I left the house, since that is Nature's arrangement."

"Yes, that is Nature's arrangement."

"And then, it was a matter of my future happiness."

"Of course. And it came, this happiness . . ."

"It came in the hour, Herr Spinell, when they first brought me little Anton, our little Anton, and when he wailed so powerfully with his sturdy little lungs . . . for he is so strong and healthy . . ."

"I have heard you speak several times of the health of your little Anton. He must be unusually healthy?"

"He certainly is. And he looks so comically like my husband!"

"Ah! . . . Yes, so it all happened that way. And now you are no longer called Eckhof, but something else, and you have a sturdy little Anton, and you are ailing somewhere in the trachea."

"Yes. . . . And you are an out-and-out enigmatical man, Herr Spinell, I can assure you . . ."

"Yes, heaven knows you are that!" said the Rätin Spatz, who was still at hand.

Herr Klöterjahn's wife often occupied herself deeply with this conversation. Non-committal as it had been, still it had something concealed at bottom which nourished her preoccupations with herself. Was *this* the harmful influence which was affecting

her? Her weakness increased, and often fever set in—a quiet flame which always left her in a mood of extravagance, thoughtful and contented, and with a vague sense of injury. When she was not forced to remain in bed, Herr Spinell would step across to her with extreme caution on the tips of his large feet, and remain standing about two steps distant, one leg placed behind the other, and the upper part of his body bent slightly forward. He would speak to her in a voice softened with worship, as if his sheer devotion would pick her up tenderly and lay her on a bed of clouds, where no harsh sound, no earthly irritation, could ever reach her. At such times she would remember the way Herr Klöterjahn had of saying: “Slowly, Gabriele, *take care*, my angel, and keep your mouth closed!”—he said it as though he were slapping you on the shoulder with crude good humour. But she would dismiss this recollection hastily, and lie back purged and weak in the bed of clouds Herr Spinell was so kind as to prepare for her.

One day she went back abruptly to the conversation they had had about her parents and her girlhood.

“And it is really true, Herr Spinell,” she said, “that you could have seen the crown?”

And although this talk had occurred fourteen days ago, he knew immediately what she meant, and he assured her with emotion that back there at the spring, as she was sitting there with her six girl friends, he would have seen the little crown glittering—would have seen it glittering in her hair.

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A few days later one of the patients asked her out of politeness how her little Anton was doing back home. She sent a swift glance towards Herr Spinell, who was standing near her, and then answered somewhat peevishly: "How is he? Both he and my husband are doing very well, thank you."

VIII

Toward the end of February, one chilly day which was even clearer and more brilliant than all that had preceded it, a general feeling of good nature pervaded Einfried. The ladies and gentlemen with heart trouble were speaking to one another with flushed cheeks, the diabetic general was humming like a child, and the gentlemen with the uncontrollable legs were quite beside themselves. What was it all about? Nothing less than that a general excursion had been arranged for, a sleigh-ride through the hills in vehicles with jangling bells and snapping whips. Dr. Leander had decided on this as an entertainment for his patients.

Naturally, the "serious cases" had to stay behind. Those miserable serious cases! Everyone got together and pledged themselves to keep the whole thing a secret from them; it felt quite pleasant to be able to exercise a little sympathy and consideration. But even some who very easily could have taken part in the outing did not do so. As to Fräulein von Osterloh, she was excused without a word. Anyone as

loaded with household duties as she could not afford to think of sleigh-rides. Her presence was needed in Einfried. And, in short, she stayed. But all were distressed when Herr Klöterjahn's wife declared she preferred not to go. Dr. Leander tried in vain to urge her into taking the invigorating ride. But she claimed she was indisposed, that she had a headache, felt somewhat tired; and there was nothing to do but accept it. But the cynic and wit found occasion for the remark, "Just watch; now the decrepit baby won't go with us, either."

And he turned out to be right, since Herr Spinell let it be known that he intended working that afternoon—he liked to apply the word "work" to his doubtful activities. But not a single soul was put out by his absence, and the disappointment was no greater when the Rätin Spatz decided to keep her younger friend company since riding made her seasick.

Immediately after the midday meal, which had been served to-day even before twelve, the sleighs drew up in front of Einfried, and the patients began moving across the park in lively groups, eager, excited, and bundled up snugly. Herr Klöterjahn's wife was standing with the Rätin Spatz behind the glass door which opened on the terrace, and Herr Spinell was observing the departure from the window of his room. Amid laughing and joking, miniature battles would arise over the best seats; Fräulein von Osterloh, a fur boa around her neck, was running

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from one sleigh to another to shove baskets of food under the seats; Dr. Leander, his fur cap pulled down over his eyes, reviewed the whole scene once more with his glistening spectacles, then took his place and gave the sign to start. . . . The horses leaped forward, a woman or two let out a shriek as she fell over backwards, the bells jangled, the short-handled whips snapped and let their long cords drag in the snow behind the runners, and Fräulein von Osterloh stood at the gate waving her handkerchief until the sleighs glided out of sight at a bend in the road and the cheerful noise died away. Then she hurried back through the park to attend to urgent matters, the two women left the glass door, and almost at the same time Herr Spinell left his place of observation.

Einfried was quiet. The sleigh-party was not to be expected back before evening. The "serious cases" were lying in their rooms and suffering. Herr Klöterjahn's wife and her older friend took a short walk together, and then went up to their rooms. Herr Spinell was also in his room, busy after his fashion. About four o'clock each of the women was brought her glass of milk, while Herr Spinell received his weak tea. Shortly afterwards, Herr Klöterjahn's wife knocked on the wall which separated her room from Magistratsrätin Spatz's, and said: "Let's go down to the drawing-room for a while. I don't know what to do with myself up here."

“Right away, my dear!” the Rätin answered. “Just let me pull on my shoes. I have been lying down, you see.”

As might be expected, the drawing-room was empty. The two women took seats in front of the fire-place. The Rätin Spatz was embroidering flowers on a piece of canvas, and Herr Klöterjahn’s wife was also doing a bit of sewing, although she soon let her fancy work sink into her lap and looked vacantly above the arms of her chair. Finally she made a remark which it was not worth the trouble of moving her teeth for, but since the Rätin Spatz, however, asked “What’s that?” to her great humiliation she had to repeat the whole sentence. Then the Rätin Spatz asked a second time: “What’s that?” But at this moment steps were heard, the door opened, and Herr Spinell entered.

“Am I disturbing you?” he asked softly as he hesitated in the doorway. Then he looked on Herr Klöterjahn’s wife and inclined the upper part of his body in a certain tender, soaring manner.

The young woman answered: “Why, how could that be? In the first place, this room is a harbour open to all, Herr Spinell. And then again, in what way could you disturb us? I have the most decided sensation of boring the Rätin . . .”

At this he had nothing to answer, but allowed a smile to expose his carious teeth, and then walked somewhat stiffly under the eyes of the women to the

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glass door. He stopped here and looked out, with his back turned impolitely towards the women. Then he turned half around, although continuing to look out at the park. "The sun is gone. The sky has been clouding gradually. It is already getting dark."

"Yes, indeed; everything is in shadows," Herr Klöterjahn's wife answered. "The sleigh-party is in for some more snow, it seems. Yesterday at this time it was still broad daylight; but now it is dark already."

"Ah," he said, "after all these excessively sunny weeks a little darkness is a rest to the eyes. I am quite grateful to this sun, which lights up the beautiful and the common with equally insistent clarity, that at last it has hidden itself for a while."

"You do not like the sunlight, Herr Spinell?"

"Since I am not a painter. We become more introspective without the sun. . . . It is one thick grey mass of cloud. Perhaps that means thawing for to-morrow. In any case, I should not advise you to keep looking at your fancy work there, if I may say so."

"Oh, don't mind that, for I have already quit. But what is there to do?"

He had dropped on to the stool in front of the piano, with one arm resting on the cover. "Music . . ." he began. "Who ever hears music these days? Once in a while the English children sing little nigger songs, but that is all."

"And yesterday afternoon Fräulein von Osterloh went speeding through 'The Monastery Bells,' " Herr Klöterjahn's wife remarked.

"But it is true that you play," he said pleadingly, and stood up. "You used to play every day with your father."

"Yes, Herr Spinell, but that was *then!* Back when we sat around the spring, you know . . ."

"But do it to-day!" he begged. "Just a few bars just this once! If you only knew how thirsty I am after . . ."

"Our family doctor as well as Dr. Leander have both forbidden it expressly, Herr Spinell."

"They are not here, neither one nor the other! We are free . . . you are free! Just a few meagre chords . . ."

"No, Herr Spinell, we must not think of it. Who knows what sort of marvels you expect of me! And I have gotten out of practice, I assure you. I can do scarcely anything by heart."

"Oh, then play this Scarcely-Anything! And furthermore, here are some scores, lying here, right on the piano. No, this is nothing. But here is Chopin . . . the Nocturnes. And now all that is necessary is for me to light the candles . . ."

"Please don't expect me to play, Herr Spinell! I am not allowed. If it should hurt me?"

He was silent. He stood there in the light of the two candles; large feet, long black coat, pale grey-haired beardless face, and hanging hands. "Now

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"I won't ask you again," he finally spoke very softly. "If you are afraid that it may hurt you, then by all means leave the beauty dead and dumb which might acquire utterance beneath your fingers. You have not always been so prudent. Not, at least, when you were called upon to surrender yourself to the very opposite of beauty. Then you weren't worried about yourself, and showed a hastier and surer determination when you abandoned the spring and put off the little golden crown. . . . But listen," he went on after a pause, and his voice sank even lower, "if you sit here and play the way you once did, when your father stood beside you and made his violin sing those tones which caused you to cry . . . then it may come about that the little golden crown will glisten secretly in your hair again . . ."

"Indeed?" she asked, smiling. It happened that her voice broke on this word, so that it was pronounced half hoarsely and half tonelessly. She coughed, and then said: "And they are really Chopin's Nocturnes you have there?"

"Certainly. They are opened and everything is ready."

"Well, then, in heaven's name, I will play one of them. But only one, you hear? Then you must be contented for ever."

She arose, laid aside her fancy work, and went to the piano. She sat down on the stool, where a couple of bound volumes had been lying, adjusted the lights, and began turning over the pages. Herr Spinell had

brought a chair up beside her, and was sitting near her like a music teacher.

She played the Nocturne in E-sharp Major, opus 9, number 2. Even if she truly was somewhat out of practice, nevertheless her execution was a bit of real artistry. The piano was at best middling, but after the first few strokes she could manage it tastefully and with assurance. She displayed a nervous sense of the differentiations in tone-quality, and an imaginative feel for the slowing and speeding up of rhythm. Her touch was firm as well as soft. Under her hands the melody sang its ultimate measure of sweetness, and the little embellishments wound with a hesitating charm about her fingers.

She was wearing the dress of the day she came here: the dark, heavy coat-suit and the soft velvet embroidery—all of which gave her hands and face such an unearthly frailty. The expression of her face did not change in playing, but it seemed as though the demarcation of her lips became clearer while the shadows deepened in the corners of her eyes. When she had finished, she laid her hands in her lap and went on looking at the notes. Herr Spinell continued to sit there, without a move or a sound.

She played another Nocturne—a second and a third. Then she arose, but only to look for new pieces on the top of the piano.

It occurred to Herr Spinell to examine the volumes in black boards which had been lying on the stool. Suddenly he let out an unintelligible exclamation,

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and his large white hands began fingering passionately one of these neglected volumes.

"Impossible! . . . It is not true! . . ." he said. "And yet I am not deceiving myself! . . . Do you know what this is? What was lying here? What I am holding now? . . ."

"What is it?" she asked.

Then he pointed in silence to the title-page. He was quite pale, let the book sink down, and gazed at her with trembling lips.

"Indeed? How does that come to be here? Give it to me, then," she said simply. Then she arranged the score, took her seat, and after a moment of stillness began with the first page.

He sat next to her, bent forward, his head lowered, and his hands folded across his knees. She played the opening plaintively, with an excessive slowness, with disquietingly long pauses between the individual figures. The yearning-motif, a lonely, wandering voice in the night, was heard softly uttering its uneasy question. A silence, and an expectation. And see . . . it answers: the same weak, lonely note, only this time brighter, more tender. Another silence. And then, in that marvellous dampened *sforzato* which is like a sudden starting up, and the first sacred insistence of passion, the love-motif set in, rose, writhed keenly to a sweet culmination, sank back in resolution—and with their deep song of heavy, pained astonishment the 'cellos came forward and continued the melody.

As she played on the miserable instrument, she tried with some success to bring out the effects of the orchestra. The run of the violins in their great climb rang with a brilliant precision. She played with a precise devotion, lingered credulously over every form, and raised up each element plainly and humbly like a priest lifting the holy wafer above his head. What happened? Two forces, two eager beings struggled in pain and sanctity towards each other, and embraced in a wild, enchanted hunger after the eternal and the absolute. . . . The overture flamed up and dropped. She stopped where the curtain opens, and kept looking in silence at the notes.

In the meantime the Rätin Spatz had reached boredom to a degree which deforms the face, drives the eyes out of the head, and produces a dreadful corpse-like appearance. Beyond that, this sort of music affected the nerves of her stomach, put this dyspeptic organism in a state of anguish which made the Rätin fear an attack of cramps. "I must go to my room," she said weakly. "Good-bye; I'll be back."

Then she had left. It was much darker now. Outside, the snow could be seen falling thick and silent on the terrace. The two candles gave a restricted, wavering light.

"The second act," he whispered; and she turned the pages and began with the second act.

A blare of horns was lost in the distance. What? Or was it the rustling of leaves? The soft gurgle of a spring? Night had already poured its silence

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everywhere, and there were no urgent warnings against surrender to the powers of melancholy. The holy secret was completed. The lights went out, the death-motif sank away with a peculiar, suddenly veiled quality; and with a driving impatience, melancholy let her white coverings flutter out to the lover approaching through the darkness with wide-open arms.

O abundant and insatiable rejoicing at union in the eternal Beyond-Things! Free of distressing error, escaped from the bonds of time and place, the *you* and the *I*, the *meus* and the *tuus*, melted together in an exalted happiness. The blinding malice of day might keep them apart, but no arrogant lie could deceive again these dwellers in darkness, since the strength of the magic potion had endowed them with sight. He who had looked with love on the night of death and its sweet secret, in the orgy of his vision now had only one desire, the yearning for the sacred night, the true, eternal, unifying . . .

Oh, fall about them, night of love, and give them that oblivion which they yearn for; encompass them with ecstasies, and make them free of this world of deceit and separation. Look, the last torch has gone out! Every thought and image has dropped away in the sacred twilight, which spreads its salvation over the anguish of madness. Then, when delusion is fading, when my eye is failing at all this glory—the glory of which I was cheated by the lie of daylight; and I had been tricked into taking in its place the

restless torture of my yearnings—even *then*, O prodigy of fulfilment! even then I am the world. . . . And Brangäne's dark warning-song was followed by that soaring of violins which is higher than all reason.

"I don't understand it at all, Herr Spinell; a lot of it I can simply surmise. What does that mean, that 'even then I am the world'?"

He explained it to her, quietly and briefly.

"Yes, so it is. But how does it come that you, who understand it so well, cannot play it, too?"

Strangely enough, he could not bear up under this harmless question. He reddened, wrung his hands, and sank back into his chair. "Those two things are seldom found together," he at last said with an effort. "No, I cannot play. . . . But continue."

And she went on into the drunken songs of this miracle play. Did love ever die? Tristan's love? The love of your Isolde, and my Isolde? Oh, the strokes of death can never reach this eternal woman! What could death be but that which distresses us, which tricks lovers into disunion? In one sweet *and*, love brought them both together. . . . And if death destroys this, how else except with the very life of one could death be given to the other? And a mysterious interweaving of two melodies united them in the unnamed hope of Love's Death, the endlessly inseparable enfolding in the Fairyland of night. Sweet night! Eternal night of love! All-inclusive land of holiness! Whoever has looked at you with understanding, how could he awake to desolate day

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again without sorrow? But ban all sorrow, friendly death! Free the hungering from the famine of awaking! O unattainable storm of rhythms; O rapture of the metaphysical certainty pressing forward chromatically! How is it acquired, how is it lost, this ravishment far from the loneliness of light? Soft desires without lies or sorrow; sublime, painless extinction; superspiritual twilight in the incommensurable! You, Isolde; I, Tristan; Tristan no longer, Isolde no longer.

Suddenly something very frightful happened. She left off playing, and held her hand over her eyes that she might peer into the darkness. And Herr Spinell turned quickly about in his chair. The door back there which led to the corridor had opened, and a strange form entered, supported on the arm of a second. It was a patient at Einfried who had not been able to take part in the sleigh-ride, but was employing this evening hour in one of her instinctive and mournful rounds of the institute; it was the wife of Pastor Höhlenrauch leaning on the arm of her nurse. Without looking up, she measured the rear of the room with uncertain, groping steps, and disappeared through the door opposite—speechless and staring, wandering without consciousness. There was a long silence.

“That was the Pastorin Höhlenrauch,” he said.

“Yes, that was poor Höhlenrauch,” she answered. Then she began turning the leaves again, and played the finish to it all, played Isolde’s *Liebestod*.

How colourless and clear her lips were, and how the shadows had deepened in the corners of her eyes! Above the eyebrow, across her transparent forehead, the tiny, pale-blue vein was becoming disturbingly swollen. Under her industrious hands the unutterable ascent was completed, broken suddenly by that almost dissolute *pianissimo* which is like a floor slipping from beneath the feet, and a drop into a sublime covetousness. The abundance of a mighty attainment and conclusion broke out, was repeated . . . a bewildering turmoil of unrestricted rejoicing. Then it changed its form and its flow, seemed on the point of expiring, wove the yearning-motif once more into its harmonies, exhaled, perished, faded, glided away. Deep silence.

They both listened, turned their heads to one side and listened.

"Those are bells," she said.

"They are the sleighs. I am going now."

He arose and crossed the room. But he stopped at the door, turned about, and for a few minutes kept changing from one foot to the other. And then it happened that he, at a distance of fifteen or twenty paces from her, dropped to his knees, dropped on both knees without a word. His long black coat trailed on the floor. He kept his hands folded over his mouth, and his shoulders twitched sharply.

She sat with her hands in her lap, leaning forward away from the piano, and looking at him. A forced, uncertain smile lay on her face, and her eyes were

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peering meditatively with such effort into the darkness that they showed a slight tendency to bulge.

Out of the distance came the approaching sounds of bells, snapping whips, and a jumble of human voices.

IX

The sleigh-party, which was the talk of everybody for some time, had taken place on the twenty-sixth of February. It thawed on the twenty-seventh, when everything melted, dropped, splashed, and flowed; and Herr Klöterjahn's wife was getting along excellently. On the twenty-eighth she brought up a bit of blood . . . oh, insignificant; but it was blood. At the same time a much greater weakness than ever before came over her, and kept her confined to her bed.

Dr. Leander examined her, and his face was as hard as stone. Then he ordered what is prescribed by science: cracked ice, morphine, absolute quiet. Furthermore, the next day overwork forced him to transfer the case to Dr. Müller, who accepted it dutifully and faithfully, and in all mildness; a quiet, pale, insignificant, and unhappy man, whose modest and unheralded activities were devoted to the nearly well and the hopeless.

The opinion he expressed first of all was that the separation between the Klöterjahn couple had continued for quite a while now. It would be especially

pleasant if Herr Klöterjahn could pay another visit to Einfried, provided that his thriving business would permit it. A letter could be sent to him, perhaps even a short telegram. . . . And it would certainly cheer up the young mother and strengthen her if he would bring little Anton along; and, in addition to that, the doctors would be very glad to make the acquaintance of this sturdy little Anton.

And lo, Herr Klöterjahn appeared. He had received Dr. Müller's short telegram and came from the shore of the Baltic. He got out of the cab, called for coffee and rolls, and looked very disconcerted.

"What is it?" he asked. "Why am I called here?"

"Since it is advisable," Dr. Müller answered, "that you remain near your wife now."

"Advisable . . . advisable. . . . But necessary as well? I am tending to my business, my man, and times are bad and travelling is expensive. Was this journey unavoidable? I shouldn't have anything to say, for instance, if it was the lungs; but, thank God, it is only the trachea . . ."

"Herr Klöterjahn," Dr. Müller spoke softly, "in the first place, the trachea is an important organ . . ." He incorrectly said "in the first place," since no "in the second place" followed.

But at the same time as Herr Klöterjahn, a plump person dressed in red, plaid, and gold had arrived at Einfried, and she it was who carried in her arms Anton Klöterjahn, Jr., the small, sturdy Anton. Yes, he was there, and no one could deny that he really

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was excessively healthy. White and rosy, with clean fresh clothes, he rested fragrant and fat on the red bare arm of his servant, swallowed powerful quantities of milk and chopped meat, shouted and surrendered himself in every way to his instincts.

The author, Spinell, had observed the arrival of young Klöterjahn from the window of his room. In a peculiarly veiled manner, but sharply nevertheless, he had fixed the child in his eye while it was being carried from the cab to the house. And for some time he had remained standing there with this same expression on his face.

From now on he avoided as far as possible any meeting with Anton Klöterjahn, Jr.

X

Herr Spinell was sitting "at work" in his room.

It was a room like all the rest at Einfried: old-fashioned, simple, and distinguished. The massive chest of drawers had lions' heads of metal on it; the high wall mirror was no flat surface, but made of numerous little squares fastened together with lead; there was no carpet on the blue lacquered floor in which the stiff legs of the furniture were continued as clear shadows. A spacious writing-desk stood near the window, across which the novelist had drawn a yellow curtain, probably that he might be more by himself.

In the yellowish twilight he was sitting over the

escritoire, and writing . . . writing at one of those frequent letters which he mailed every week, and to which, ridiculously enough, he usually received no answers. A large sheet of heavy paper was lying in front of him; in the upper left-hand corner, under a mighty queerly drawn landscape, the name, Detlev Spinell, was to be read in the most completely up-to-date letters. He was covering this paper now with a small, carefully traced, and exceptionally pure handwriting.

“Dear Sir,” it began. “I am sending you the following lines because I cannot help it, because the things I have to say to you burden me, torture me, and make me tremble, because the words pour forth with such violence that I should be stifled with them if I did not venture to relieve myself of them in this letter. . . .”

To give truth its dues, this “pouring forth” was certainly not the case, and God only knows what useless reasons prompted Herr Spinell to assert it. Words seemed to be doing anything but pour forth from him; for a man whose everyday occupation was writing, he seemed to get along miserably slow. If anyone had seen him, he would have come to the conclusion that an author is a person to whom writing is much more difficult than to anybody else.

He would get hold of one of those little downy hairs on his cheeks between two finger-tips, and twist

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at it for fifteen minutes at a stretch, while he stared into space and didn't advance a line. Then he would write a few neat words, and stop again. On the other hand, it must be admitted that whatever finally appeared gave the impression of ease and vividness, even if its contents were of an unusual, questionable, and often incomprehensible character:

"It is an inevitable necessity with me that those things which I have been seeing, which have been standing before my eyes as an inextinguishable vision for weeks, should be made plain to you as well . . . that you should see them through my eyes in that utter clarity in which they have stood before my inner vision. I am accustomed to yielding to such compulsions, that I may adjust my experience to that of the world in general, employing properly placed words in such a manner as to make them burning and unforgettable. I trust, then, that you will give me your attention.

"I wish to state only what actually has been, and still is. I should simply like to tell a story, a very short, unspeakably moving story; to tell it without commentary, without accusations or judgments, but in my own words. It is, Sir, the story of Gabriele Eckhof, the woman whom you now call your wife. And please note: it was you that lived through it, and yet it is I whose words will be the first truly to elevate it to the importance of an experience.

"Do you remember, Sir, the garden, the old,

grown-up garden behind the grey ancestral home? Green moss jutted out of the cracks in the weathered walls enclosing this dreamy wilderness. Also, do do you remember the spring in the midst of it all? Lilac-coloured flags bent over its dank edges, and a white stream muttered its secrets down over the stones. The summer day was nearing a close.

"Seven virgins were sitting in a circle around the spring. But in the hair of the seventh, the first, the one, the sinking sun seemed mysteriously to be weaving a glimmering symbol of superiority. Her eyes were like troubled dreams, and yet her pure lips were smiling.

"They were singing. They kept their narrow faces turned towards the peak of the jet, just where, in a noble, weary curve, it inclines to fall again. And their soft, high voices hovered about its slender dance. Perhaps they held their frail hands folded across their knees while they sang.

"Do you recall the picture, Sir? Did you see it? You did not see it. Your eyes were not made for that, and your ears were not made to catch the shy sweetness of its melody. If you had seen it, you would not have dared to breathe. You would have struggled to keep down the pounding of your heart. You would have had to go, back into life, into your life, to preserve deep within you for the rest of your earthly existence this vision as something untouchable and imperishably sacred. But what did you do?

"This picture should have been an end in itself,

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Sir. Did you have to come and destroy it, that you might continue it in vulgarity and the ugliness of pain? It was a touching and placid deification, immersed in the crepuscular glory of decay, dissolution, and extinction. An ancient line, already too weary and too noble for the facts of life, was standing at the end of its days, and its last utterances were the sounds of art, a few notes on the violin, full of the penetrative melancholy of those who are ripe for death. Did you see the eyes from which these notes lured forth tears? It is possible that the souls of the six playmates belonged to life; but the other one should have had for her sister and mistress—beauty and death.

“You saw it, this beauty of death. You looked at it, but only to covet it. No reverence, no instinct to pull away, touched your heart at the thought of her appealing sanctity. It was not enough for you merely to behold; you had to possess, exploit, desecrate. How admirably you chose! You are an epicure, Sir, a plebeian epicure, a cultured peasant.

“Please let me assure you that I do not harbour the slightest desire to anger you. What I am saying is not an affront, but the formula, the simple psychological formula for your simple, artistically uninteresting personality. And I say all this only because I feel called upon to illuminate somewhat your life and actions for you, since it is my one inevitable calling on this earth to give things their names, to make them speak, and to throw more light on the

unrealized. The world is full up of what I might call the 'unconscious type.' And I can't bear them, all these unconscious types. I cannot stand all this blunt mindless and unthinking turmoil and commerce, this world all around me of exacerbating simplicity! I am driven with painful insistence to orient everything around me—in so far as I am capable—to express and bring it into consciousness, completely indifferent as to whether this results favourably or unfavourably, whether it brings with it consolation and improvement, or leaves nothing but anguish.

"As I have said, Sir, you are a plebeian epicure, a cultured peasant. Of an especially strong constitution, in one of the very lowest stages of development, with the aid of money and congenial living you have suddenly arrived at a barbaric corruption of the nervous system to an extent never before heard of in history. And along with this, you have acquired a certain lascivious refinement in your appetites. It is quite possible that when you decided to make Gabriele Eckhof your own, the muscles of your gullet went through the same smacking procedure as at the sight of some rare food, of a tasty soup.

"The truth is that you led her and her half-dreamed desires astray, that you took her out of the rich garden into life and ugliness, that you gave her your common name, and made her a wife, a housekeeper, a mother. You have lowered this shy, weary, full-hearted beauty of death with its exalted inutility; you have brought it down to subjection beneath the

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vulgarity of everyday life, and that stupid, relentless, and detestable idol which we call nature. And not a single suspicion of the deep degradation of your actions has ever crossed your rustic consciousness.

“Again; what happens? She, with eyes like troubled dreams, presents you with a child. Every bit of blood and strength which she possesses, she gives to this being which is a continuation of the low-minded existence of its father . . . she gives this, and dies. Sir, she is dying! And if she does not depart in commonness, if at last she has risen out of the depths of her denigration, and passed away proud and purified under the deadly kiss of beauty, it is I that saw to it. You, in the meantime, were trying to while away the hours with chambermaids in lonely corridors.

“But her child, Gabriele Eckhof’s son, lives, flourishes, and triumphs. Perhaps it will follow in the steps of its father, and become a good business man, a taxpayer and a well fed member of the community. Or perhaps a soldier or an official, some stupid, dependable pillar of the state. In any case, an amusing, normally functioning creature, trustworthy and unscrupulous, sturdy and ignorant.

“Kindly accept the confession, Sir, that I hate you, you and your child, because I hate the life, the common, ridiculous, and yet conquering life which you represent—the eternal contrast and deadly enemy to beauty. I do not dare to say that I detest you. I cannot. I will be frank. You are the

stronger. I have only one thing to bring against you in battle, the sublime weapon and engine of vengeance of the weak: mind and the word. To-day I have made use of these. For this letter—and here, too, I am being frank—is nothing but an act of retaliation, and I rejoice if there is only one word here which is sharp, brilliant, and beautiful enough to reach you, to make you feel some force outside of you, and just for an instant make your robust imperturbability vacillate.

“DETLEV SPINELL.”

And Herr Spinell put this letter in a stamped envelope, provided it with a neatly written address, and mailed it.

XI

Herr Klöterjahn knocked on the door of Herr Spinell's room. He was holding a large, neatly written sheet of paper in his hand, and looked like a man who had decided to proceed with energy. The mail had done its duty; the letter had taken its journey; it had made the remarkable trip from Einfried to Einfried, and arrived in the proper hands. The time was now four o'clock in the afternoon.

As Herr Klöterjahn entered, Herr Spinell was sitting on the sofa, reading his own novel with the bewildering cover designs. He arose and looked at his visitor with a surprised interrogation, although he plainly reddened.

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"Good day," said Herr Klöterjahn. "I hope you will pardon my disturbing you. But may I ask whether you wrote this?" He held out the large, neatly written sheet of paper in his left hand, and beat on it with the back of his right until it crackled. Then he stuck his right hand in the pocket of his wide, comfortable trousers, turned his head to one side, and, as with a good many people, opened his mouth to listen.

Herr Spinell was smiling peculiarly. He was smiling amiably; somewhat puzzled and half apologetic, he drew his hand across his head as though he were thinking, and said: "Why, to be sure . . . yes . . . I took the liberty . . ."

The point was that he had been too indulgent this morning, and slept until nearly noon. Consequently, he was suffering from a bad conscience and a stuffy head, felt a bit nervous and very ill-fit to defend himself. In addition, a spring breeze had set in, causing him to relax and making him a bit despondent. All this must be mentioned as an explanation of how it happened that he conducted himself so poorly in the following scene.

"So! Aha! Fine!" said Herr Klöterjahn, pressing his chin against his breast, raising his eyebrows, stretching his arms, and making countless other little gestures, to plunge heartlessly into the matter once this question of form had been settled. Out of delight in his person, he went a bit too far in these gestures; what finally followed could not completely

correspond to the threatening punctiliousness of his preparations. But Herr Spinell was quite pale.

"Very fine!" Herr Klöterjahn repeated, and shook his head vigorously to show how impregvably sure he was of his case. "I wouldn't waste a word on this scribble, frankly, it would simply be too cheap for attention, if it didn't clear up for me certain things I didn't understand before, certain changes. . . . However, that doesn't concern you, and doesn't belong here. I am a busy man; I have better things to think about than your unutterable visions . . ."

"I wrote 'inextinguishable vision,'" Herr Spinell said, pulling himself up. This was the one time he made any show of dignity.

"Inextinguishable . . . unutterable . . ." Herr Klöterjahn answered, and glanced at the manuscript. "You write a very miserable hand, my friend; I shouldn't like to have you working in my office. At first glance it seems good enough, but held up to the light it is full of all sorts of gaps and wobbles. But that is your affair, and has nothing to do with me. I came to tell you that, in the first place, you are an ass. . . . Now, let us hope that has been made known to you. Besides that, you are a thorough coward, and I don't need to spend much time making that clear to you. My wife wrote me once that you never look into the faces of the women you meet, but just barely graze them that you might carry away a lovely impression, out of fear of the truth. Unfortunately, later on she quit telling me of you in her letters;

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otherwise, I should have some other stories about you. But there you are. You say 'beauty' every third word, but it is nothing but shooting off, and sham and envy, and that's where your shameless reference to 'lonely corridors' comes from; it was supposed to knock me over, and instead it was funny, just plain funny! Do you get all that straight now? Have I 'illuminated your life and actions,' you poor devil? Although it is not my 'infallible calling,' ha, ha!"

"I wrote 'inevitable calling,'" Herr Spinell interposed, but he gave up the field again immediately. He stood there helpless and rebuked, like a big, whimpering, grey-haired schoolboy.

"Inevitable . . . infallible . . . You are a low-down coward, I tell you. You see me at table every day. You speak to me and smile, you pass things to me and smile, you wish me a pleasant day and smile. And then all of a sudden you sling all this muck of stupid calumnies at me. Ha, yes, you have courage on paper! If it comes down to a ridiculous letter like this. But you have been doing underhanded things against me, acting behind my back; I see that now plainly enough. Although you don't need to get the idea that it has done you any good! In case you entertain the hope that you have put any nonsense into my wife's head, then you're all wrong, my dear sir, for she's too intelligent a person for that! Or finally, if you think that she received me, the child and me, any differently from usual when we

arrived, then you've put the last touch to your crudeness! If she didn't kiss the little fellow, it was simply out of caution, because now the theory is that it might not be the trachea, but the lungs, and in that case we can't be sure. . . . Although I ought to assure you in addition that as to the lungs and your 'Sir, she is dying!' you are an ass!"

At this point Herr Klöterjahn tried to recover his wind. He had become very angry by now, kept continually piercing the air with the index finger of his right hand and soiling the manuscript in his left hand most wretchedly. Between his blond English side-whiskers, his face was frightfully red, and his cloudy forehead was rent with swollen veins like choleric lightning.

"You hate me," he went on, "and you would detest me if I were not the stronger. Yes, so I am, by God; I've got my heart in the right place, while yours for the most part is in your shoes. And I'd pound the life out of you and your 'mind and the word,' you sneaking idiot, if it weren't against the law. But I don't mean to say by that, my friend, that I'm going to take your invectives and let it go at that. And when I get home and show that 'common name' to my lawyer, we'll see if you don't get the surprise of your life. My name is a good one, sir, because I have made it good, and if anyone would lend a penny on yours—well, you can decide that question for yourself, you prowling loafer! You have to be dealt with by law! You are a menace to the community!

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You put people out of their heads! . . . But you don't need to imagine that you have succeeded this time, you patronizing sneak! I am not usually put to rout by individuals such as you. My heart is in the right place . . ."

Herr Klöterjahn was now really aroused to the utmost. He shouted, and claimed over and over that his heart was in the right place.

"‘They were singing.’ Bosh. They *weren't* singing! They were darning. And besides, as far as I caught, they were talking about a recipe for potato-cakes. And when I mention that ‘decay’ and ‘dissolution’ to my father-in-law, he'll get his attorney after you as well, be sure of that. . . . Did you see the picture? Did you see it? Naturally I saw it, but I don't appreciate such things, which explains why I didn't catch my breath and flee. I don't barely graze on women's faces; I look right at them, and if they please me, and want me, I take them. My heart is in the right pl——"

There was a knock. Nine or ten sharp raps on the door one after the other . . . a slight persistent commotion of anxiety which silenced Herr Klöterjahn. And a voice which wouldn't stop, driven to impropriety by distress, kept saying in the greatest haste: "Herr Klöterjahn, Herr Klöterjahn, oh, is Herr Klöterjahn there?"

"Wait outside," Herr Klöterjahn growled. "What is it? I am busy here."

"Herr Klöterjahn," said the faltering, breaking

voice, "you must come . . . the doctors are there, too . . . oh, it is terribly sad . . ."

He got to the door with one stride and flung it open. The Rätin Spatz was standing outside. She held her handkerchief over her mouth, and big, elongated tears were dropping into it by twos.

"Herr Klöterjahn," she broke out. "It is so terribly sad. . . . She brought up so much blood, so awfully much. . . . She was sitting up very quietly in bed humming a bit of music to herself, and then it came, O God, so much of it . . ."

"Is she dead?" Herr Klöterjahn shrieked. He grabbed the Rätin by the shoulder and began shaking her in the doorway. "No, not quite, no? Not quite yet; she can still see me. . . . Did she bring up a little blood again? From the lungs? I'll admit, it might be from the lungs . . . Gabriele!" he spoke suddenly, his eyes beginning to fill, and it was evident what a good, kindly, warm, human feeling broke over him. "Yes, I'm coming!" and he pushed the Rätin out of the room and down the corridor. From quite a distance down the twisting hallway could be heard a rapidly vanishing "Not quite, no? . . . From the lungs? . . ."

XII

Herr Spinell was standing in the same place he had stood during Herr Klöterjahn's so rudely interrupted visit. He was gazing at the open door. Finally he

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made a few steps forward and listened intently. But everything was quiet, so that he closed his door and went back to his room.

For a while he looked at himself in the mirror. Then he went over to the writing-desk, took a little flask and a glass out of one of the pigeon-holes, and poured himself a cognac—and nobody could blame him. Then he stretched out on the sofa and closed his eyes.

The upper shutter of his window was open. Outside in the park of Einfried the birds were twittering; and in these frail, pert little noises spring found its full, penetrative expression. Once Herr Spinell spoke to himself softly. "Infallible calling . . ." Then he twisted his head back and forth and sucked the air through his teeth, as though he were suffering with neuralgia.

It was impossible for him to rest and collect himself. We are not made for such heavy experiences as that! . . . Through a process of the spirit which it would take too long to analyse, Herr Spinell came to the conclusion that he would get up and move about a bit, walk for a while in the open air. He took his hat and left the room.

As he stepped out of the house and the soft, aromatic air surrounded him, he turned his head and let his eyes wander slowly along the wall until they came to a certain window. It was covered with a curtain; his gaze clung there for a while, earnest and gloomy. Then he put his hands behind his back and began

walking along the gravel path. He walked, lost in thought.

The flower-beds were still covered, the trees and bushes were still bare. But the snow was gone, and the roads showed only here and there any traces of moisture. The broad park with its grottoes, arbours, and little pavilions lay in an excellently coloured afternoon light, with strong shadows and a full, yellow sun; and the black branches of the trees stood out in sharp, delicate outline against the bright sky.

It was about the time when the sun increases in size, when the formless mass of brilliance becomes a noticeably sinking disk, a milder, broader flame which the eye can bear. Herr Spinell did not see the sun. His path was so situated that the sun was hidden from him. He was walking with lowered head, humming a little bit of music to himself, just a few bars, one figure mounting plaintively and uneasily, the yearning-motif. . . . But suddenly, with a jerk, one short, convulsive intake of breath, he stopped dead, and his wide-open eyes stared out from under heavily wrinkled brows with an expression of horror and defence.

The road had made a turn; now it led in the direction of the sinking sun. It was pierced by two slender strips of cloud with golden edges. It stood out large and oblique in the sky, setting the tops of the trees on fire and pouring its reddish-yellow light across the park. And in the midst of this golden

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illumination, with the powerful halo of the sun's disk just above, a plump somebody, dressed in red, gold, and plaid, was standing prominently in the road; her right hand was resting on a large hip, while with her left hand she was moving slowly back and forth a gracefully formed baby-carriage. But in this carriage the child was sitting, Anton Klöterjahn, Jr., Gabriele Eckhof's bouncing son.

He was dressed in a white padded coat and a large white hat; he was chubby-cheeked, and sat magnificently among his pillows. His eyes met those of Herr Spinell gleefully and unerringly. The novelist wanted to retreat. If he had been a man, he would have possessed the strength to pass by this unexpected sight with its flood of sunshine, and continue his walk. But just then, monstrously enough, Anton Klöterjahn began to laugh and rejoice. He screeched in unexplained delight. It almost seemed uncanny.

God only knows just what started him—whether it was the black form in front of him which threw him into such wild merriment, or whether some excess of animal well-being had come over him. In one hand he was holding a bone teething-ring and in the other a tin pop-gun. He extended both of these objects hilariously out into the sunlight, shook them and banged them together as though he were trying to shoo someone away with scorn. His eyes were almost closed with pleasure, and his mouth was so yawningly agape that his rosy gums, every bit of

them, were visible. Also, he threw his head about, meanwhile exulting.

Then Herr Spinell turned his back and got away from there. Followed by the jubilations of the little Klöterjahn, holding his arms in a certain cautious and stiffly gracile manner, he walked over the gravel with the vehement, yet hesitating steps of one who seeks to hide the fact that he is—inwardly—on the run.

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I

It was hardly more than a wretched pretext of a sun that stood over the huddled city, milky and pale behind layers of clouds. The streets with their gabled houses were damp and windy; and often a kind of soft hail fell, not snow, and not ice.

School was out. Hordes of liberated children were streaming across the paved court out through the iron gate, separating and hurrying off to right and left. Big students held their books pressed with dignity high up against the left shoulder, while with their right arm they steered against the wind towards dinner. The smaller ones dropped into a cheerful trot which made the slush splash about them and set the accoutrements of knowledge to clattering in their sealskin satchels. But occasionally there would be a general pious-eyed doffing of caps before the Odin's-hat and the Jupiter's-beard of a gravely advancing professor.

"So you finally came, Hans?" said Tonio Kröger. He had been waiting on the viaduct for a long while; smiling, he approached his friend, who was coming

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through the gate in conversation with other companions and was just about to go along with them. . . .

"What's that?" he asked, and looked at Tonio. "Yes, that is so! Let's walk a bit now."

Tonio was silent, and his eyes grew sad. Hans had forgotten; it hadn't occurred to him again until now that they were going to take a little walk together this noontime. And he himself had almost lived in the expectancy of this ever since they had agreed on it.

"Yes, good-bye, you!" Hans Hansen said to his comrades. "I'll go a little ways with Kröger then,"—and the two turned to the left, while the others shuffled off to the right.

Hans and Tonio had time for a walk after school because they both came from homes where lunch was not served until four o'clock. Their fathers were prominent wholesale merchants who held public offices in the city. For several generations the Hansens had owned the extensive lumber yards down by the river where powerful saws hissed and screeched as they cut into the logs. But Tonio was the son of the Consul Kröger, whose sacks of vegetables with the broad black imprint of the firm could be seen driven through the streets day after day; and the large old house of his forefathers was the most magnificent one in the whole city. . . . On account of their many acquaintances, the friends had to keep doffing their caps continually, and by many people the two fourteen-year-old boys were even spoken to first.

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Both had their school-bags slung over their shoulders; and both were well and comfortably dressed: Hans in a short reefer's jacket covered on the back and shoulders by the wide blue collar of his sailor suit, and Tonio in a grey belted overcoat. Hans was wearing a sailor hat with short ribbons, and a shock of his straw-coloured hair protruded from underneath. He was extraordinarily pretty and well-formed, broad in the shoulders and small in the hips, with sharp widely-set steel-blue eyes. But under Tonio's round fur cap, out of a dark face which was quite southern in the sharpness of the features, two sombre and delicately shadowed eyes with over-heavy lids looked forth dreamily and a little timidly. . . . His mouth and chin were moulded with unusual softness. He walked negligently and irregularly, while Hans's lanky legs in their black stockings kept time and stepped out so elastically. . . .

Tonio did not speak. He was miserable. Knitting his somewhat slanting eyebrows, and with his lips rounded for whistling, he bowed his head and looked sideways into the distance. This posture and expression were peculiar to him.

Suddenly Hans thrust his arm beneath Tonio's and gave him a side-glance, for he understood very plainly what it was all about. And although Tonio kept silent for the next few steps, yet he suddenly became very pliable.

"I didn't forget it at all, Tonio," Hans said, and looked down in front of him at the pavement. "But

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I just thought that nothing could come of it, because it is so wet and windy. But I don't mind that in the least, and I think it was great of you to wait for me anyhow. I thought you must have gone home, and I was sorry . . ."

At these words Tonio became agitated and exultant.

"Yes, now let's go over the walls," he said with emotion. "Across the Mill-wall and the Holsten-wall, and then I'll take you home, Hans. . . . No, no—it doesn't matter at all if I have to go back alone. The next time you will come with me."

At bottom he didn't believe very firmly what Hans had told him; and he felt sure that Hans laid only half as much weight on their walk as he. Yet he saw that Hans regretted his forgetfulness and was doing his best to placate him. And he had little intention of refusing to be placated. . . .

The fact was that Tonio loved Hans Hansen and had already suffered much through him. Whoever loves the more is at a disadvantage and must suffer—his fourteen years of life had already taught him this hard simple fact. And it was like him that he should note such discoveries, should register them inside himself and get a certain pleasure from them, without really using them as defences or deriving any practical value out of them. And also it was natural with him to rate such acquisitions as far more important and more interesting than the knowledge which was forced upon him at school, and even to

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devote his hours of instruction in the Gothic-vaulted classroom mostly to testing out the full burden of such observations, and pondering on them. And this occupation gave him as much satisfaction as when he would go about his room with his violin (for he played the violin) and let its tones melt softly into the murmuring of the fountain which rose dancing below in the garden under the branches of the old walnut-tree. . . .

The fountain, the old walnut-tree, his violin, and in the distance the ocean, the Baltic whose summer dreams he was allowed to hear during vacations—it was these things that he loved; he surrounded himself with them, you might say; and his inner life took its course among them. The names of these things can be used with good effect in verse, and they actually did keep recurring in the verses which Tonio Kröger composed now and then.

This fact, that he possessed a book of verses which he had written himself, became known through his own fault; and it did him much damage with both his fellow students and the teachers. On the one hand, the Consul Kröger's son found it stupid and vulgar of them to take offence at this, and he disrespected both students and teachers, whose bad manners alienated him besides, and whose personal weaknesses he penetrated with unusual keenness. But, on the other hand, he himself felt something illicit and improper in the writing of verses; and in a measure he must yield to all those who considered it an occupation

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to look askance at. Yet that did not enable him to renounce it. . . .

Since he wasted his time at home, was slow and poor at concentration in his studies, and was always marked down by his teachers, he was continually bringing home the wretchedest reports; whereupon his father, a tall, scrupulously dressed man with thoughtful blue eyes who always wore a wild flower in his buttonhole, would display great anger and distress. Nevertheless, Tonio's mother, his beautiful black-haired mother whose Christian name was Consuelo and who was so totally different from the other women of the city, since his father had once gone and gotten her from away down on the map—his mother was absolutely indifferent to these reports. . . .

Tonio loved his dark and emotional mother, who played the piano and the mandolin so marvellously; and he was glad that she was not disturbed over his questionable status among mankind. But, on the other hand, he felt that his father's anger was vastly more dignified and more respectable; and in spite of the scoldings, he was in perfect agreement with his father at bottom, while he found his mother's gay indifference a little bit loose. Often his thoughts ran something like this: "It is enough that I am what I am and neither can nor will change myself—indolent, unruly, and concerned with things which nobody else thinks about. At least it is right for me to be soundly reprimanded and punished for this, and not have it all passed over with kisses and music. We aren't

gipsies in a green wagon, but respectable people, Consul Krögers, the Kröger family." . . . Nor was it rare for him to think: "Why am I so strange and so at odds with things, falling out with my teachers and never intimate with the other boys? Look at them, the good scholars and the solid middling ones. They don't find the teachers comic, they don't make verses, and they just think things which everyone thinks and which can be spoken out loud. What regular and comfortable terms they must be on with everything and everybody! That must be good. . . . But what is wrong with me, and what will come of all this?"

This manner of looking at himself and his relation to life played an important rôle in Tonio's love for Hans Hansen. He loved him first because he was beautiful, but next because here was what seemed to be in every way his own counterpart and opposite. Hans Hansen was a splendid scholar, and a good fellow besides; he rode, belonged to a gymnasium, swam like a hero, and enjoyed general popularity. The teachers were almost tender in their liking for him, called him by his first name, and helped him in every way; his comrades tried to win his favour, and on the street ladies and gentlemen stopped him, grabbed him by the shock of straw-coloured hair which protruded from under his sailor cap, and said: "Good day, Hans Hansen, with your neat head of hair! Are you head of the class yet? Remember me to Papa and Mamma, my good lad. . . ."

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Such was Hans Hansen; and ever since Tonio Kröger had known him he felt a yearning whenever he looked at him, an envious yearning which sat above the breast and burned. "Who else," he thought, "could have such blue eyes as you, and live on such natural and intimate terms with everyone? You are always occupied with something highly proper and generally respectable. When you have finished your school assignments, then you take riding-lessons or work with the compass-saw; and even in vacations, by the sea, you are taken up with rowing, sailing, and swimming, while I lie forlorn and idle in the sand, and stare at the mysterious changes shifting across the face of the sea. But that's why your eyes are so clear. To be like you . . ."

He did not make the attempt to be like Hans Hansen, and perhaps he was not even very earnest in his wish. But he hungered painfully, such as he was, to be loved by him; and he bid for his love after his fashion, a slow, thorough, and devoted fashion, passionate and melancholy, but with a melancholy that can burn deeper and more devouringly than all the abrupt passion which his appearance might have led one to expect.

And he did not bid in vain, for Hans, who respected a certain superiority in him, a trick of the lips which enabled Tonio to express difficult things, understood quite well that here was an unusually strong and tender feeling for him; he showed his

gratitude and gave Tonio much happiness by his response—but also many tortures of jealousy, of disillusion, and of frustrated efforts to establish a mental union. For it was a remarkable fact that Tonio, although he envied Hans Hansen for his manner of living, was continually trying to win him over to his own—which could succeed only for moments, at best, and then only superficially. . . .

“I just read something wonderful, something splendid,” he said. They were walking along and both eating out of a poke of fruit candy which they had bought for ten pfennigs from Jiverrsen’s store in the Mühlenstrasse. “You must read it, Hans; it is ‘Don Carlos,’ by Schiller. . . . I will lend it to you if you want. . . .”

“Ah, no,” Hans Hansen said; “forget that, Tonio; that doesn’t suit me. I’ll stick to my horse books, you know. There are some great pictures in them, I’ll tell you. Sometime when you are at our house I’ll show them to you. They are snapshots, and show the nags trotting, galloping, and vaulting, in all the positions which you are never able to see in real life because it goes too fast. . . .”

“In all positions?” Tonio asked politely. “Yes, that is fine. But as for ‘Don Carlos,’ it beats everything imaginable. There are places in it, you’ll see, which are so beautiful that you feel a shock, a kind of explosion.”

“An explosion?” Hans Hansen asked. “How is that?”

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"For example, there is the place where the king has cried because he was deceived by the marquis, but the marquis has deceived him only through love of the prince, you understand, for whom he sacrifices himself, and now the news comes from the cabinet to the antechamber that the king has cried. 'Cried? The king cried?' All the courtiers are frightfully affected, and it goes right through you, because he is a frightfully stern and rigid king. But it is so plain why he cried, and it really makes me sadder than it does the prince and the marquis put together. He is always so completely alone and without love, and now he believes he has found someone, and this man betrays him. . . ."

Hans Hansen looked sideways into Tonio's face, and something in this face really must have won him over to the subject, for he suddenly shoved his arm back under Tonio's again and asked:

"Just how does he betray him, Tonio?"

Tonio became agitated.

"Yes, the fact is," he began, "that all letters to Brabant and Flanders . . ."

"There comes Erwin Jimmerthal," Hans said.

Tonio was silent. "I wish the earth would swallow him up, this Jimmerthal!" he thought. "Why must he come and disturb us? If only he doesn't walk with us the whole way and talk about his riding-lesson!" For Erwin Jimmerthal had just had a riding-lesson. He was the son of the bank-director,

and lived out here beyond the Gate. With his bowed legs and narrow eyes, he was coming towards them along the avenue, his school-bag missing already.

"Hello, Jimmerthal," Hans cried. "I am taking a little walk with Kröger . . ."

"I have to go to town," Jimmerthal said, "and see about something. But I will go along a little piece with you two. That must be fruit candy you have there? Yes, thanks, I'll take some. To-morrow we have another lesson, Hans." The riding-lesson was meant.

"Great!" Hans said. "Do you know, I am getting leather leggings now, because I just got the high mark in drill."

"You don't have any riding-lessons, do you, Kröger?" Jimmerthal asked, and his eyes were nothing but two white slits.

"No," Tonio answered hesitatingly.

"You should ask your father," Hans Hansen observed, "to let you take lessons too, Kröger."

"Yes," Tonio said, hastily and indifferently. For a moment he felt a lump in his throat, because Hans had called him by his last name. And Hans seemed to feel this, for he said in explanation:

"I call you Kröger because your first name is so crazy. You won't mind, will you? but I can't stand it. . . . That is really no name at all. Still, you can't help yourself any!"

"No, you have that name mainly because it sounds

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foreign and is unusual," Jimmerthal said, and acted as though he had intended to make everything all right.

Tonio's mouth twitched. He pulled himself together and said:

"Yes, it is a stupid name; God knows I'd rather be called Heinrich or Wilhelm, you can be sure of that. But it comes from the fact that I was named after one of my mother's brothers who is called Tonio; for my mother comes from down south."

Then he was silent and let the two of them discuss horses and harness. Hans had taken Jimmerthal by the arm and talked with a fluent sympathy which could never have been aroused in him for "Don Carlos." . . . From time to time Tonio felt his nose prickling with the desire to cry. Also he had difficulty in keeping his chin under control, for it continually threatened to tremble.

Hans could not stand his name—what was to be done? He himself was called Hans, and Jimmerthal was called Erwin; good, they were commonly known names which nobody resented. But "Tonio" was something foreign and unusual. Yes, in every way there was always something unusual about him, whether he wanted it or not—and he was alone and shut out from the regular and the ordinary, although he was certainly no gipsy in the green wagon, but a son of Consul Kröger, from the Kröger family. . . . But why did Hans call him Tonio so long as they were alone, if, when a third person came up, he be-

gan to be ashamed of him? At times he was near him and won over to him, that was true. "Just how does he betray him, Tonio?" he had asked, and taken him by the arm. But when Jimmerthal had arrived, he had breathed easier nevertheless, had abandoned him and had gone out of his road to complain about his foreign Christian name. How sad it was to have to see through all this! . . . At bottom Hans Hansen cared for him a bit when they were alone; he knew it. But when a third person came, then he was ashamed of him and threw him over. And he was alone again. He thought of King Philip. The king had cried.

"Oh, Lord!" Erwin Jimmerthal said. "But now I must really go back to town. Good-bye, you two, and thanks for the fruit candy!" Then he leaped to a bench standing by the road, ran along it with his bowed legs, and went trotting away.

"Jimmerthal is not bad!" Hans said emphatically. He had a pampered and self-conscious way of announcing his sympathies and dislikes by passing judgment like a sovereign. . . . And then he continued talking about the riding-lesson because he was already started. And it wasn't so far now to the Hansens' home. The road across the walls did not require so much time. They held on to their caps and bent their heads before the strong damp wind which moaned and whistled in the bare branches of the trees. And Hans Hansen talked, while Tonio simply put in now and then an artificial "Oh" and "Yes, yes," without

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any pleasure in the fact that in the excitement of his conversation Hans had taken his arm again; for that was simply an apparent intimacy, without significance.

Then they left the wall near the railroad station, watched a train puffing by in clumsy hastiness, counted the cars for a pastime, and waved at the man who was sitting in the rear of the very last one, muffled up in his fur coat. And on the Lindenplatz, in front of the wholesaler Hansen's villa, they stopped; and Hans demonstrated minutely how amusing it is to hang on the garden gate and swing back and forth on the hinges until they creaked. And then he said that he must leave.

"Yes, I have to go in," he said. "Good-bye, Tonio. The next time I'll go home with you for sure."

"Good-bye, Hans," Tonio said. "It was nice to go for a walk."

Their hands which pressed each other were all wet and rusty from the garden gate. But when Hans looked into Tonio's eyes, something like remorse showed in his pretty face.

"Anyhow, I'll read 'Don Carlos' soon," he said hurriedly. "That about the king in the cabinet must be great!" Then he put his school-bag under his arm and ran through the front garden. Before disappearing in the house, he nodded back once more.

And Tonio Kröger went away from there winged and transfigured. The wind bore him along from

behind; but that was not the only reason that he left so lightly.

Hans would read "Don Carlos," and they would have something in common, which neither Jimmerthal nor anyone else could discuss with them! How well they understood each other! Who could tell—perhaps he could even bring him to the point of writing verses? . . . No, no, he didn't want that! Hans should not become like Tonio, but remain what he was, so bright and strong, the way everyone loved him, and Tonio most of all! But still it wouldn't hurt if he read "Don Carlos." . . . And Tonio went through the old squat gate, went along the harbour, and up the steep, damp, and windy gable-lined street to the house of his parents. His heart now was alive: he felt longings and brooding envy, and just a little disdain, and a very shy happiness.

II

Blonde Inge, Ingeborg Holm, the daughter of Dr. Holm who lived near the market, there where the Gothic well stood high, complex, and pointed—she it was whom Tonio Kröger loved when he was sixteen years old.

How did it happen? He had seen her thousands of times; yet one evening he saw her in a certain light, saw how, while talking with a girl friend, she laughingly tossed her head to one side with a kind of insolence, touched the back of her head with a not

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especially slender, not especially delicate girlish hand, so that the white gauze sleeve slipped back from her elbow, heard how she stressed a word, an unimportant word, in a certain way, which gave a warm resonance to her voice—and a thrill went through him, much stronger than he used to feel at times when he looked at Hans Hansen, in those days when he was a little stupid boy.

On this evening he carried away her image, with the thick blond plait, the narrow laughing blue eyes, and the delicate hint of freckles above the bridge of her nose. He could not go to sleep, because he heard the resonance in her voice; he tried softly to imitate the stress with which she had spoken the unimportant word, and he was horrified at the result. Experience taught him that this was love. He well knew that love would bring him much pain, distress, and humiliation, that it would, further, disturb his peace and fill the heart with melodies without allowing a person enough respite to round things out and calmly mould them into something solid; yet he accepted it with joy, yielded to it completely, nourished it whole-heartedly, for he knew that it makes rich and vital, and he yearned to be rich and vital, instead of rounding things out at his leisure.

This conquest of Tonio by the cheerful Inge Holm took place in the spacious *salon* of the Frau Consul Husteede, whose turn it was this evening to give the dancing-lesson. For it was a private course, and only members of the leading families took part,

gathering in their parents' houses consecutively in order to receive instruction in dancing and decorum. But expressly for this purpose dancing-master Knaak came here once a week from Hamburg.

François Knaak was his name, and what a man he was! "*J'ai l'honneur de me vous représenter,*" he said. "*Mon nom est Knaak.* . . . And you don't say this while bowing, but not until you are standing erect again—in a subdued tone, and yet clear. You are not always in a situation where you must introduce yourself in French, but if you can do it correctly and faultlessly in this language, then you won't slip when it comes to German." How wonderfully the black silk frock-coat clung to his fat hips! His trousers fell in soft folds down over his patent-leather shoes, which were ornamented with broad satin rosettes; and his brown eyes looked around with a resigned happiness upon their own beauty.

Everyone was awed by his wealth of sureness and propriety. He walked—and no one walked like him, elastic, undulating, swaying, royal—up to the mistress of the house, bowed, and waited for her hand to be extended to him. He received it, spoke his thanks softly, stepped back jauntily, turned on his left foot, speedily lifted the right with its compressed tip from the floor, and stepped away with shaking hips. . . .

You went backwards, and out through the door amid bowings if you were taking leave of company; you never pulled up a chair by grabbing it by one

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leg and sliding it along the floor, but you carried it lightly by the back and set it down noiselessly. You didn't stand around with your hands folded across your stomach and your tongue stuck in one corner of your mouth; but if you did so, then Herr Knaak had a way of doing it after you, so that you would detest this position for the rest of your life.

That was decorum! But as to the dance, Herr Knaak was even more masterly here, if possible. In the spacious *salon* the gas flame burned in the chandelier, and the candles on the mantelpiece. The floor was strewn with talcum, and the students stood about in a silent semicircle. But beyond the portières, in the adjoining room, the mothers and aunts were sitting on plush chairs and observing Herr Knaak through their lorgnettes, how he bent over, holding each lapel of his frock-coat with two fingers, and demonstrated the successive steps in the mazurka with quivering legs. But if he intended to dumbfound his public completely, he would suddenly and without provocation leap from the floor, spin his legs around in the air with bewildering swiftness, and fairly twinkle with same, whereupon with a thump which was subdued but yet shook everything in its firmness, he returned to this earth. . . .

"What an incredible ass!" Tonio thought deep down to himself. But he saw plainly that Inge Holm, cheerful Inge, often followed Herr Knaak's movements with an unconscious smile, and this was not the only reason why all this marvellously piloted flesh-

ness wrung from him something like astonishment. How peacefully, how well beyond confusion, Herr Knaak's eyes looked at things! They did not penetrate to those depths where things became complicated and sad; they knew nothing except that they were brown and beautiful. But for that reason his bearing was so proud! Yes, a person must be stupid to be able to walk like him; and then a person was liked, since he deserved it. He understood it so well that Inge, blonde sweet Inge, looked at Herr Knaak the way she did. But why would a girl never look at himself like that?

But yet, that happened. There was Magdalena Vermehren, the daughter of Vermehren the attorney, with the sweet mouth and the large, dark, glittering eyes full of earnestness and reverie. She often fell while dancing; but she came to him when partners were chosen, she knew that he wrote verses, twice she had asked him to show them to her, and often she gazed at him from a distance with her head lowered. But what did that have to do with him? He, he loved Inge Holm, the blonde cheerful Inge, who surely must despise him because he wrote bits of poetry. He would look at her, see her narrow blue eyes full of happiness and scorn, and an envious yearning, a sharp oppressive pain that he was shut away from her and must always be foreign to her lay in his breast and burned. . . .

"First pair *en avant!*" Herr Knaak said, and no words can describe how wonderfully the man brought

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out the nasal sound. They were practising the quadrille, and to Tonio's profound horror he found himself in one and the same *carré* with Inge Holm. He avoided her as well as he could, and yet he was continually finding himself near her; he struggled to keep his eyes away from her, and yet his glance was continually falling upon her. . . . Now she came sliding and running by, holding to red-headed Ferdinand Matthiessen; she threw back her plait and, breathing deeply, took her place opposite him. Herr Heinzelmann, the pianist, struck the keys with his bony hands, Herr Knaak gave the command: the quadrille began.

She moved about in front of him, back and forth, stepping and turning; often he caught a fragrance which came from her hair or the delicate white stuff of her dress, and his eyes became sadder and sadder. "I love you, dear, sweet Inge," he said inwardly, and into these words he laid his distress that she was so eagerly and cheerfully absorbed in the matter at hand and did not notice him. He suddenly recalled a beautiful poem by Storm: "I'd like to sleep, but you must dance." He was tortured by the humiliating anomaly in this having to dance while one is loving. . . .

"First pair *en avant!*" Herr Knaak said; then came a new turn. "*Compliment! Moulinet des dames! Tour de main!*" and no one will explain in what a gracious manner he swallowed the mute *e* of the *de*.

"Second pair *en avant!*" Tonio Kröger and his

lady were there. "*Compliment!*" and Tonio Kröger bowed. "*Moulinet des dames!*" And Tonio Kröger, with lowered head and gloomy brows, laid his hand upon the hands of the four ladies, upon that of Inge Holm, and danced *moulinet*.

On all sides a giggling and laughing started up. Herr Knaak fell into a ballet posture which expressed a conventionalized horror. "Alas!" he cried. "Stop, stop! Kröger is lost among the ladies! *En arrière*, Miss Kröger, back, *fi donc!* Everyone understood it except you. Shoo! Away! Back with you!" and he pulled out his yellow silk handkerchief and with it shooed Tonio Kröger back to his place.

Everyone laughed, the boys, the girls, and the ladies beyond the portières, for Herr Knaak had made something just too funny out of the incident, and it was as amusing as in a theatre; except that Herr Heinzelmänn was waiting with a dry business-like expression for the sign to go on playing, as he was hardened to Herr Knaak's effects.

Then the quadrille was continued, and then there was a pause. The maid came clattering through the door with a tray of glasses full of wine jelly, and the cook followed in her wake with a cargo of plum pudding. But Tonio Kröger stole away, went secretly out into the corridor and, his hands behind his back, stood before a window with its blind drawn; it did not occur to him that absolutely nothing could be seen through this blind and that it was ridiculous

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therefore to stand in front of it and act as though you were looking out.

But he was looking into himself, where there were so many sorrows and longings. Why, why was he here? Why was he not sitting by the window in his room, and reading Storm's "Immensee," and looking out now and then into the half-dark garden where the old walnut-tree was groaning cumbrously? That was his place. Let the others dance and apply themselves eagerly and competently to the matter at hand! . . . No, no, his place was here nevertheless, where he was assured of being near Inge even though he was simply standing by himself, far off from her, and trying to distinguish from the buzzing, clatter, and laughter her voice with its ring of warm life. Your narrow blue laughing eyes, you blonde Inge! People can be as beautiful and cheerful as you only if they don't read "Immensee" and are never even tempted to do such things. That is the sad part of it! . . .

She had to come! She had to notice that he was gone, had to feel how things were with him, had to follow him secretly, if only out of sympathy, lay her hand on his shoulder, and say: "Come in with us, be gay, I love you." And he listened behind him and waited in unreasoning suspense for her to come. But she came by no means. Such things never happened on this earth.

Had she laughed at him too, like all the others? Yes, she had done that, though he would gladly have

denied it for her sake and his own. And yet it was only out of his absorption in her nearness that he had danced in the *moulinet des dames*. And what did that matter? Perhaps some day they would stop laughing! Hadn't a magazine recently taken a poem of his, although it did go under before the poem had time to appear? The day would come when he was famous, when everything that he wrote was printed, and then they would see whether or not it would make an impression on Inge Holm. . . . It would *not* make an impression; no, that was a fact. On Magdalena Vermehren, who always fell down; yes, on her. But never on Inge Holm, on blue-eyed, cheerful Inge; and so wasn't it all in vain? . . .

Tonio Kröger's heart contracted painfully at this thought. To feel marvellous, playful, and moody powers stirring within you, and yet to know that those people you hanker after are standing off from you in good-natured inaccessibility—that is very distressing. But although he was standing before a drawn blind, lonely, excluded, and without hope, and in his misery was acting as though he could see out, yet he was happy. For now his heart was alive. Warmly and sadly it was beating for you, Ingeborg Holm, and his thoughts embraced your blonde, light, and impertinently ordinary little person in blissful self-denial.

More than once he stood hot-faced in lonely spots, where music, the smell of flowers, and the tinkling of glasses penetrated but softly; he tried to dis-

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tinguish your ringing voice from among the distant sounds of the entertainment; he stood in pain on account of you—and was happy nevertheless. More than once it distressed him that he was able to talk with Magdalena Vermehren who always fell down, that she understood him and laughed with him and was serious, while blonde Inge, although he sat next to her, seemed distant and foreign and estranged from him, for his language was not her language—and he was happy nevertheless. For happiness, he told himself, is not to be loved; that is a gratification of vanity, mixed with repugnance. Happiness is to love, and perhaps to snatch deceitful little moments of nearness to the object of love. And he wrote this thought down inside him, thought it out completely, and felt it to the very roots.

“Faithfulness!” Tonio Kröger thought. “I will be faithful and love you, Ingeborg, as long as I live!” He was as well-meaning as all that. Yet inside him there was a soft whispering of fear and sorrow, for he had really forgotten Hans Hansen entirely, and he saw him every day. And the ugly and deplorable thing was that this soft and somewhat crafty voice proved right: time passed and days came when Tonio Kröger was not so thoroughly prepared to die for cheerful Inge, since he felt within him desires and power to accomplish a lot of remarkable things in this world, after his fashion.

And he moved warily about the sacrificial altar on which the pure chaste flame of his love was burn-

ing, he knelt before it and fanned and fed it in every way, since he wanted to be faithful. And yet after a while, unnoticeably, without excitement or noise, it was out.

But Tonio stood for a long time before the cold altar, filled with astonishment and disillusion over the fact that faithfulness was impossible on this earth. Then he shrugged his shoulders and went his way.

III

He went the way he had to go, a little negligently and irregularly, whistling to himself, with his head bent to one side, and looking into the distance; and if he got on the wrong track, this happened because for some people there really is no right track. If he was asked what in all the world he intended to become, he was accustomed to say (and had already written it down as well) that he bore within himself the possibilities for a thousand forms of existence, together with the intimate awareness that at bottom they were all impossibilities. . . .

Even before leaving his cramped native city, he had gently broken the holds and cords which bound him to it. The old Kröger family had gradually slipped into a condition of decay and disintegration; and people had cause to consider Tonio Kröger's own nature and habits among the evidences of this condition. His father's mother, the head of the family,

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had died; and his father, the tall, thoughtful, carefully dressed gentleman with the wild flower in his buttonhole, followed her soon afterwards. The large house of the Krögers, with all its noble history, stood for sale, and the firm was dissolved. Still, Tonio's mother, his beautiful emotional mother who played the piano and the mandolin so wonderfully and who never minded about anything, had become engaged again after a year's interval—and to a musician at that, a virtuoso with an Italian name, and she went with him into the blue distance. Tonio Kröger found this a bit loose; but who was *he* to stop her? He wrote verses and couldn't even say what in the whole world he intended to become. . . .

And he left his winding native city with the damp wind blowing around its gables, left the fountain and the old walnut-tree in the garden, the confidants of his youth, left also the sea which he loved so well—and felt no pain at this. For he had grown big and wise, had understood how things stood with him, and was full of scorn for this stodgy and low-visioned existence which had held him so long.

He surrendered himself wholly to that power which seemed to him most illustrious, which he felt called upon to serve and which promised him rank and honours—the power of the mind and the word which reigns smiling over blind, inarticulate life. With his youthful passion he devoted himself to it, and it repaid him with all it has to give, and it took from him mercilessly all it is wont to take as compensation.

It sharpened his eyes, and let him penetrate the big words which inflate men's bosoms; it unlocked for him the souls of others and of himself, made him clairvoyant, and showed him the inside of things, all that lies behind words and actions. But what he saw was this: comedy and distress—comedy and distress.

Then, along with the pain and the hauteur of knowledge, came lonesomeness; since he could not endure to be among the innocent with their good-natured muddled attitudes; and the mark on his brow disturbed them. . . . But he was sweetened more and more by his delight with words and form, for he would say (and he had written it down already) that the knowledge of the soul alone would inevitably make us dismal if it weren't that the satisfaction of expression kept us alert and brisk. . . .

He lived in large cities and in the south where he expected the sun to give a rich ripeness to his art; and perhaps it was also the blood of his mother that drew him here. But since his heart was dead and without love, he dropped into adventures of the flesh, descended deep into debauchery and passionate guilt—and suffered unspeakably from it all. Perhaps it was the heritage from his father, the tall, thoughtful, neatly dressed man with the wild flower in his buttonhole, which made him suffer so much down south and often aroused in him the faint melancholy memory of his former well-being as a boy, which he never found again in any of his pleasures.

A repugnance and hatred for the senses took hold

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of him; he hankered after purity and the contentment of respectability, yet he went on breathing the atmosphere of art, the sweet, mild, scent-laden atmosphere of a continual spring, where things bud and brew and sprout with the mysterious joy of creation. So it came down to this: vacillating between over-strong extremes, tossed back and forth between icy intellectualism and devouring sensuality, he led an exhausting life under the pangs of conscience, a fastidious, dissolute and extraordinary life, which he, Tonio Kröger, in the last analysis abhorred. "What vagrancy!" he thought at times. "Just how was it possible for me to run into all these eccentric adventures? At bottom, I am no gipsy in a green wagon. . . ."

But in proportion as his health was weakened, the mastery of his art was sharpened. He became picky, exacting, precious, subtle, easily irritated by the banal, and extremely sensitive in matters of tact and taste. When he came before the public for the first time, those who were concerned with such matters voiced much approval and delight, for it was a well-wrought thing that he had offered, full of humour and the knowledge of suffering. And his name, the very one his teachers had called him by when they reprimanded him, the very one with which he had signed the first rhymes to the walnut-tree, the fountain, and the sea, this sound compounded of South and North, this *bourgeois* name with its touch of exoticism, rapidly became a label to signify excellence.

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For the painful radicalism of his experiences was coupled to a rare, doggedly persistent, and fame-hungry industriousness; and this, battling with the hypercritical keenness of his tastes, produced unusual works under conditions of acute distress.

He didn't write like someone who works to live, but like a person who wants to do nothing but work because he holds his mere existence as nothing, wishing to be taken into account only as a creator, and going about soberly and inconspicuously, like an actor who, without his make-up, is nothing so long as he has nothing to represent. He worked, unseen, in silence, alone, and was filled with disdain for those trivial writers whose talent was a social asset, who, whether they happened to be rich or poor, went about wildly and irresponsibly, giving their best to the choice of appropriate neckties, devoting themselves first of all to the problem of living happily, amiably, and artistically, unaware that good works originate only under the pressure of a poor life, that those who live do not work, and that a man must be dead in order to be totally a creator.

IV

"Am I intruding?" Tonio Kröger asked, at the door of the studio. He held his hat in his hand and even bowed a little, although Lisaweta Iwanowna was his friend and he said everything to her.

"Spare yourself, Tonio Kröger, and come in with-

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out ceremony!" she answered with her swift accent. "It is well known that you had the advantage of a good upbringing, and know what is proper." She put her brush in her left hand with the palette, held out her right hand to him, and looked into his face, laughing and shaking her head.

"Yes, but you are working," he said. "Let me look. . . . Oh, you have progressed." And he observed alternately the two painted sketches leaning against chairs on either side of the easel, and the large canvas with its network of squares where, in the confused and shadowy charcoal outline, the first spots of colour were beginning to emerge.

It was in Munich, in a back building of Schellingstrasse, several stories high. Outside, beyond the broad north window, were sunshine, the twitter of birds, and the blue sky. The fresh sweet smell of spring streamed in through an open shutter and mingled with the odour of fixative and oils which filled the work-room. Unhindered, the golden light of the brilliant afternoon flooded the large barren studio; it shone confidently across the somewhat dilapidated floor, across the crude table beneath the window covered with bottles, tubes, and brushes, and across the unframed studies on the unpapered walls; it shone on the torn silk folding screen which marked off a little stylishly furnished living-room and cosy corner near the door; it shone on the unfinished work on the easel, and on the painter and the writer in front of it.

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She was probably as old as he, which is to say a little beyond thirty. In her dark blue spotted smock she sat on a low stool and rested her chin on her hand. Her brown hair, done tight against her head and already a little grey at the sides, covered her temples in light waves and framed her dark, Slavic, strongly sympathetic face, with the short nose, the sharply wrought cheek-bones, and the little black glittering eyes. Tense, distrustful, and with a kind of irritation, she examined her work slantingly and with squinting eyes. . . .

He stood beside her, held his right hand supported on his hip, and with his left he twirled his brown moustache rapidly. His slanting eyebrows were in sombre, strained agitation, and he was whistling softly to himself, as usual. He was dressed well and with the utmost care, in a conservatively cut suit of restful grey. But on his studied forehead, across which his dark hair was parted with such extraordinary simplicity and exactness, there was a twitching of the nerves. His southern features were already sharp, as though they had been gone over and marked with a hard pencil; while his mouth seemed so lightly outlined, his chin formed so softly. . . . After a time he ran his hand across his eyes and forehead, and turned away.

"I should not have come," he said.

"Why shouldn't you, Tonio Kröger?"

"I have just left off from working, Lisaweta, and things are just about the same in my head as on this

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canvas; a scaffolding, a faint first draft dirtied with corrections, and a few splotches of colour, yes. And now I come here and see the same thing. And I find here again the conflict and antagonism," he said, sniffing the air, "which plagues me at home! It is strange. If you are ruled by a thought, you find it expressed everywhere; you can even *smell* it on the wind. Fixative and the aroma of spring, yes? Art and—well, what is the other? Don't say 'nature,' Lisaweta. 'Nature' is not exhausting. Ah, no, I should best have gone for a walk, although it is a question whether I would have felt any better if I had. Five minutes ago, not far from here, I met a colleague, Adalbet, the short-story writer. 'God damn the spring!' he said in his aggressive manner. 'It always has been, and always will be, the most atrocious season! Can you lay hold of a sensible idea, Kröger, can you work out the slightest touch and effect in peace, when there is an indecent tingling in your blood, and you are disturbed by a lot of improper sensations which, as you examine them, turn out to be hopelessly trivial and completely worthless junk? For my part, I'm going now to the café. That is neutral territory, untouched by the change of seasons; it represents, you see, what we might call the cloistered and exalted sphere of the literary, where we are capable only of ideas with some distinction. . . .' And he went to the café; and perhaps I should have gone along."

Lisaweta was amused.

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"Very good, Tonio Kröger. Very good—that about the 'indecent tingling.' And he is certainly right to a degree, for spring really isn't specially conducive to work. But now pay attention. Now, nevertheless, I am still working on this little thing here, this slight touch and effect, as Adalbet would say. Afterwards let's go into the *salon* and drink tea, and you talk yourself out; for I see plainly enough that you are filled up to-day. Until then arrange yourself anywhere, on the chest there, for instance, if you aren't afraid for your patrician clothes. . . ."

"Oh, leave me in peace about my clothes, Lisaweta Iwanowna! Do you want me to be running around in a torn velvet jacket or a red silk vest? As artists we are always adventurers enough inside ourselves. Externally we shall dress well, the devil! and act like respectable people. . . . No, I am not filled up," he said, and looked on while she prepared a mixture on her palette. "You hear, there is simply a problem, an antagonism, on my mind and disturbing me in my work. . . . Now, what were we just speaking of? Of Adalbet, the short-story writer, and what a proud and firm man he is. 'Spring is the most atrocious season,' he said, and went into the café. For you have to know what you want, isn't that so? See: I too am made nervous by spring, I too am confused by the sweet triviality of the memories and sensations that it arouses; except that I cannot bring myself to complain against it

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and despise it for that. For the fact is that spring makes me ashamed, ashamed of its pure naturalness and its triumphant youth. And I don't know whether to envy or despise Adalbet for knowing nothing of these things. . . .

"We work poorly in the spring, of course; and why? Because we feel, and because anyone is a duffer to think that the creator dare feel. Every genuine and conscientious artist smiles at the naïveté of this quack notion—with melancholy perhaps, but he smiles. For what people say must never be the main thing, but only the material, unimportant of itself, out of which the structure is put together in times of a calm, playful superiority. If you are too close to what you have to say, if your heart beats too warmly over it, then you can be sure of a complete fiasco. You become pathetic, you become sentimental; something stodgy, heavy, ungoverned, unironical, unseasoned, boring, banal originates under your hands, and the result is nothing but indifference on the part of others and disillusion and distress on the part of yourself. . . . For it is really so, Lisaweta: emotion, warm hearty emotion is always banal and useless: and only the irritations and the cold ecstasies of our corrupt, our expert nervous system, are artistic. One must be something extrahuman and inhuman, before he will stand in a peculiarly distant and impartial relationship to the human, before he will be in a position where he will be tempted to play upon the human, to play with it,

to present it effectively and tastefully. The gift for style, form, and expression already presupposes this cool and critical relationship with the human, even a certain human poverty and desolation. For the strong and healthy emotion—there is no getting around it—is without taste. It is all over with the artist as soon as he becomes a man and begins to feel. Adalbet knew that, and so he went into the café, into the ‘cloistered sphere,’ indeed!”

“Well, God help him, Batushka,” Lisaweta said, washing her hands in a tin basin. “You don’t need to follow him.”

“No, Lisaweta, I am not following him; and for the simple reason that I am now and then in a position where the springtime of my craft can shame me a little. You see, sometimes I receive letters from abroad, testimonials of praise and gratitude from my public, wonderful letters from people who have been moved. I read these letters, and am touched by the warm and helpless human emotions which my art has brought out; I am seized with a kind of pity for the enthusiastic naïveté which speaks out of these lives; and I redden at the thought of how much these upright folks would be abashed if they got one look behind the scenes, if their innocence could ever conceive that a righteous, healthy, and respectable person simply does not write, mimic, compose. . . . None of which hinders me from using their admiration for my genius, for elevating and stimulating me; I take it tremendously in earnest, then make a

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face like an ape who is playing the great man. . . . Ah, don't argue with me about that, Lisaweta! I tell you that I have often been tired to death of representing the human without participating in the human. . . . Is the artist a man at all? Let us ask 'woman' about that! It seems to me, we artists all share somewhat in the fate of those prepared papal singers . . . We sing with touching beauty, yet——"

"You should be a bit ashamed, Tonio Kröger. Come to tea now. The water will be boiling immediately, and here are the cigarettes. You stopped at soprano-singing, and now go on. But you should be ashamed. If I didn't know with what proud passionateness you are devoted to your calling . . ."

"Don't speak of a 'calling,' Lisaweta Iwanowna! Literature is not a calling at all, but a curse, and that ends it. When does it begin to show itself, this curse? Early, frightfully early. At a time when one by rights should still be living in peace and accord with God and the world. You begin by feeling yourself set apart, in some mysterious antagonism to others, to the usual, the ordinary. The abyss of irony, disbelief, opposition, knowledge, feeling which separates you from people yawns deeper and deeper. You are alone, and henceforth there is no intercommunication. What a fate! Provided that your heart is sufficiently alive, sufficiently *loving*, to feel it as frightful! . . . Your self-consciousness takes fire, because you among thousands detect the mark on your brow and feel that it escapes no one.

I knew an actor of genius who as a man had to fight against a sickly timidity and unsteadiness. His overly excited sense of his ego, together with his lack of a rôle, of something to perform, produced such an effect on this consummate artist and impoverished man. An artist, a real one, not one whose *bourgeois* calling is art, but one predestined and damned to art—it takes little keenness to pick him out from a group of people. The sense of separateness, of not fitting in, of being known and looked at, something at once commanding and embarrassed, shows in his face. In the features of a prince who is walking in civilian dress among a crowd, you can observe something similar. But here no civilian clothes help, Lisaweta! Disguise yourself, mask yourself, dress like an attaché or like a lieutenant of the guard on furlough—you hardly need to raise your eyes and speak a word, and everyone will know that you are not a human being, but something strange, something estranging, something different. . . .

“But *what* is the artist? No question has demonstrated more acutely than this, humanity’s smugness and laziness of perception. ‘It is a gift,’ good people say humbly, when they are under the effects of an artist; and since, from their good-natured standpoint, pleasant and elevated effects must also have totally pleasant and elevated origins, no one suspects that perhaps here the most wretchedly conditioned, most utterly questionable ‘gift’ is involved. . . . It is

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well known that artists are very touchy—now, it is also well known that this is not usually the case with people of good consciences and soundly established self-reliance. . . . You see, Lisaweta, in a more refined form I hold essentially to all the *suspensions* against the typical artist which any of my stoutly respectable forefathers up there in the narrow city would have brought against any mountebank and adventurous artist who might have entered his house. Listen to this. I know a banker, a grey-haired business man, who has a gift for writing stories. He makes use of this gift in his leisure hours, and his works are often quite distinguished. In spite of—I say ‘in spite of’—this sublime talent, this man is not entirely irreproachable. On the contrary, he has already had to serve a heavy sentence, and for very good reason at that. Yes, it happened very strangely that he became conscious of this gift for the first time while in the penitentiary, and his experiences as a convict form the central theme in all his productions. With a little boldness, one could deduce from this that in order to become a poet it is necessary to be at home in some kind of penitentiary. But doesn’t the suspicion arise that his experiences in the prison were less intimately connected with the roots and origins of his craft than was the *element which brought him there*? A banker who writes stories—that is a rarity, is it not? But a non-criminal, a sound and irreproachable banker who

writes stories—*that simply does not exist*. . . . Yes, now you are laughing, and yet I was only half joking. No problem, none in the world, is more distressing than that of art and its effect. Take the most remarkable product of the most typical and therefore most powerful artists—take such a morbid and deeply suggestive work as ‘Tristan and Isolde,’ and observe the effect which this work exerts on a young, healthy man with thoroughly normal feelings. You see exaltation, strengthening, warm righteous enthusiasm, excitation perhaps to the point of actual ‘artistic’ creation. . . . The good dilettante! Among us artists it looks basically different from what he could ever imagine with his ‘warm heart’ and ‘noble enthusiasm.’ I have seen artists admired and fêted by women and young men, while I *knew* about them. In matters concerning the origin, and the conditions of art, and the phenomena which go hand in hand with art, we continually keep making the most remarkable discoveries . . .”

“About other people, Tonio Kröger—pardon me—or not merely about other people?”

He was silent. He knitted his slanting eyebrows and whistled to himself.

“Please let me have your cup, Tonio. It is not strong enough. And take another cigarette. Besides, you know very well that you see things in a manner in which they do not necessarily need to be seen. . . .”

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"That is Horatio's answer, my dear Lisaweta. 'To look at things so,' means 'to look at them too closely,' doesn't it?"

"I say that we can look at them just as closely from another angle, Tonio Kröger. I am a mere stupid painter girl, and if I am able to make any objections to you, if I can somewhat protect your own calling from you, then it is sure to be nothing new which I advance, but merely a warning reminder to you of what you already know. . . . As for instance: the purifying, hallowing effect of literature; the destruction of the passions through knowledge and the word; literature as the road towards understanding, towards forgiveness and love; the emancipating power of speech; above all, the literary spirit as the noblest aspect of the human spirit, the literary man as the complete man, as saint—to look at things in *this* way means not to look at them closely enough?"

"You have a right to speak like that, Lisaweta Iwanowna, and especially in view of the work of your poets, of the adorable Russian literature which so truly represents the holy literature you speak of. Yet I have not left your objections out of account, but they go along with all that is in my mind to-day. . . . Look at me. I do not seem inordinately cheerful, no? A bit old and sharp-featured and tired, isn't that so? Now, returning to 'knowledge,' a person would let himself think that way who, essentially pious, soft-hearted, well-meaning, and a little sentimental, would be quite simply destroyed and an-

nihilated by psychological clarity. Not to let oneself be overcome by the world's sorrow; to observe, notice, accept even the wretchedest things, while keeping in good spirits in the perfect assurance of moral superiority over the repulsive invention of life.—Yes, of course! Yet occasionally, in spite of all your delight in the expression, things become a little too much for you. Does understanding everything mean forgiving everything? I don't know. There is something which I call the nausea of knowledge, *Lisaweta*: the condition wherein a man has simply to see through a thing in order to feel himself, not reconciled by any means, but disgusted to death—the case of Hamlet the Dane, this typical man of letters. He knew what it meant: being called to knowledge without being born to it. Compelled even to see clearly through the tearful veil of the feelings, to recognize, to notice, to observe, and to lay the observed thing smilingly aside at the very moment when hands are clasping, when lips are meeting, when mortal eyes, blinded by emotion, grow dim—it is disgraceful, *Lisaweta*, it is despicable, it is revolting . . . but what good is there in being revolted?

“Another, but no less amicable aspect of the matter is, of course, sophistication, indifference, and ironic weariness towards all truth; for it is a fact that nowhere else in the world are things more silenced and hopeless than in a circle of clever people who are already in full rout. All knowledge is old and

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boring. Pronounce some truth which perhaps has given you a certain youthful delight in its conquest and possession, and they will answer your ordinary enlightenment with a curt release of breath through the nose. . . . Oh, yes, literature makes weary, Lisaweta! In human society it can happen to a person, I assure you, that through sheer scepticism, through leaving his opinions unstated, he can be considered stupid, whereas he was simply haughty and lacking in courage. . . . So much for 'knowledge.' But as to the 'word,' isn't it perhaps less a matter of salvation here than a chilling, a putting-on-ice, of the emotions? Seriously, there is an icy and revoltingly arrogant quality to this pat and superficial discharge of emotion through literary speech. If your heart is too full, if you feel yourself moved too much by some sweet or exalted experience: nothing simpler! You go to the man of letters, and everything is settled in the shortest possible time. He will analyse and formulate your affection for you, call it by name, express it and expatiate on it, will relieve you of the whole burden for ever, and make you indifferent, and no charges asked. But you will go home relieved, cooled, and enlightened, and will wonder how anything in this matter could have been disturbing you with so sweet a tumult only a short while ago. And you want seriously to defend this cold and vain charlatan? Whatever has been expressed—his credo runs—has been discharged. If the whole world is expressed, then it is discharged,

solved, done with. . . . Very good! Yet I am no nihilist . . ."

"You are no——" Lisaweta said. . . . She was holding her spoon full of tea up to her mouth, and became rigid in this position.

"Well, yes . . . well, yes . . . come out of it, Lisaweta! I am not so, I tell you, with reference to living emotion. You see, the man of letters fails at bottom to understand that life may still go on living, that it is not ashamed of this, even after it has been expressed and 'discharged.' But see here, it goes on sinning undeviatingly, for all action is sin in the eyes of the mind. . . .

"I am near the end, Lisaweta. Listen to me. I love life—this is a secret. Take it and keep it—I have told it to no one else. People have said, people have even written and had it printed, that I hate life, or fear or despise or shun it. I have enjoyed hearing this, it flattered me; but it is no less false for that reason. I love life. . . . You are smiling, Lisaweta, and I know why. But I beg you, don't think what I am saying now is literature! Don't think of Cesare Borgia or any drunken philosophy which has that for a slogan! He is nothing to me, this Cesare Borgia; I don't put the least faith in him, and I will never, never understand how people can honour the extraordinary and the demonic as the ideal. No, 'life'—as it stands in eternal contrast to the mind and art—not as a vision of bloody greatness and savage beauty, not as the irregular does it present itself

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to us irregular people; but the normal, the respectable, and the likable are the realm of our yearnings, they are life in all its seductive banality! That man is not an artist for long, my dear, whose last and deepest enthusiasm is for the refined, the eccentric, and the Satanic, who does not know the hankering after the harmless, simple, and living, after a little friendship, devotion, confidence, and human happiness—the stealthy and devouring hankering, Lisaweta, after the bliss of mediocrity! . . .

“A human friend! Will you believe that it would make me proud and happy to possess a friend among human beings? But up to now I have had friends only among demons, goblins, profound sorcerers, and spectres drunk with knowledge, which is to say, among men of letters.

“Occasionally I get on to some platform, find myself in a room facing people who have come to hear me. You see, then it happens that I notice myself looking around among the public, that I catch myself spying secretly through the auditorium, and asking myself, who is it that came to me, whose applause and thanks penetrate to me, with whom does my art create an ideal union here? . . . I do not find what I am looking for, Lisaweta. I find the herd and the community that is well known to me, a gathering of the first Christians, you might say, people with unwieldy bodies and fine souls, people who always fall down, so to speak—you understand me, Lisaweta—people to whom poetry is a delicate re-

venge on life; always simply the sufferers and yearners and the poor, and never any one of those others, the blue-eyed, Lisaweta, who have no need of the mind! . . .

“And, after all, would it not be a regrettable inconsistency to wish that things were different? It is absurd to love life and yet be striving with all your faculties to draw it on your side, to win it over to the delicacies and the melancholies, the entire sickly nobility, of literature. The realm of art is widening on this earth, and the realm of health and innocence is falling away. Whatever is still left, we preserve as carefully as possible, and we should not want to seduce people into poetry who would much rather look at the snapshots in books on horses!

“For, in conclusion—is there anything more miserable to look upon than life when it makes an attempt at art? We artists detest no one more basically than the dilettante, the man in life who thinks that he can also on occasion be an artist. I answer you, this kind of detestation is among my personal experiences. I happen to be out among society in some good house; we are eating, drinking, and chatting, we understand one another perfectly, and I feel cheerful and grateful that I am able to get lost for a while among harmless and regular people as one of them. Suddenly (this has happened to me) an officer rises, a lieutenant, a handsome and sturdy fellow whom I should never have thought capable of an act unworthy of his uniform, and asks in unmistakable words for

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permission to acquaint us with a short piece of verse which he has written. With a dismayed smile, we grant him this, and he carries out his program; taking a paper which he had up until now kept concealed in his coat pocket, he recites his work, something about music and love, in short, something just as deeply felt as it is ineffectual. But now I ask everyone: a lieutenant! A man of the world! He really didn't have to do it! . . . Well, it turns out as it has to: long faces, silence, a little trumped-up applause, and the profoundest discomfiture on all sides. The first mental fact I became conscious of is that I feel myself involved in the blame for this disturbance which this unthinking young man has brought upon the company. And undoubtedly I too, in whose trade he has blundered, have mocking and distant glances directed towards me. But the second mental fact consists in this: that this man, for whose habits and character I had just been feeling the noblest respect, suddenly sinks, sinks, sinks in my eyes. . . . I am seized by a charitable sympathy. Along with a few other good-hearted and well-meaning gentlemen, I step up to him and speak to him. 'My felicitations,' I say. 'Lieutenant! What a pleasant gift! No, that was splendid!' And I just narrowly miss clapping him on the shoulder. But is charity the feeling with which one has to meet a lieutenant? . . . His fault! There he was standing, and in great embarrassment paying for the false notion that one dare pluck one leaf, a single one,

from the laurel-tree of art, without giving his life for it. No, I stick by my colleague, the criminal banker.—But don't you find, Lisaweta, that I have a Hamletic eloquence to-day?"

"Have you finished now, Tonio Kröger?"

"No. But I shall say no more."

"And it is enough, too.—Are you waiting for an answer?"

"Do you have one?"

"I should think so.—I have listened to you carefully, Tonio, from beginning to end, and I will give you the answer which fits everything you have said to me this afternoon and which is the solution for the problem that has disturbed you so much. Now then! The solution is this: that you, as you sit there, are quite simply a *bourgeois*."

"Am I?" he asked, and collapsed slightly. . . .

"It seems that hits you hard, and it ought to. And for that reason I shall mitigate the sentence a bit, for I can do that: you are a *bourgeois* on the wrong path, Tonio Kröger—a strayed *bourgeois*."

—Silence. Then he stood up decisively and reached for his hat and stick. "I thank you, Lisaweta Iwanowna; now I can go home in comfort. I have been 'discharged'!"

v

Towards fall Tonio Kröger said to Lisaweta Iwanowna:

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"Yes, I am taking a trip now, Lisaweta; I must air myself a bit. I must away, I seek the open."

"Well, what then, Little Father, does it so please you again to go to Italy?"

"God, forget about Italy, Lisaweta. I am indifferent to Italy even to the point of disdain! It has been a long time since I used to imagine that I belonged there. Art, sweet sensuality. . . . In short, I can't do it. I renounce it. The whole *bellezza* makes me nervous. Nor can I stand all these frightfully vivacious people down there with their black animal eyes. These Romans have no conscience in their eyes. No, I'm going to Denmark for a while."

"To Denmark?"

"Yes, and I promise myself something good from that. It happens that I have never been there, near as I was to the border all during my youth—yet I have always known and loved the country. I surely must get this northern leaning from my father, since my mother was really more for *bellezza* in so far as she was not indifferent to everything. But take the books that are written up there, these deep, pure, and humoristic books, Lisaweta—for me there is nothing like them, I love them. Take the Scandinavian meals, these incomparable meals which can be managed only in a strong salt air (I don't know whether I shall still be able to manage them at all) and which I really know something about; for people eat somewhat like that where I come from. Just

take the names, the Christian names, which people are graced with up there, and many of which are also used where I come from: a sound like Ingeborg, a harp stroke of the most immaculate poetry. And the sea—they have the Baltic Sea up there! . . . In a word, I am going up for a trip, Lisaweta. I will see the Baltic Sea again, will hear these Christian names again, will read these books on the very spot; also I will stand on the platform of Kronborg, where the ghost came to Hamlet and brought destitution and death upon the poor, noble young man. . . .”

“How are you going, Tonio, if I may ask? What route are you taking?”

“The usual one,” he said with a shrug, and blushed noticeably. “Yes, I shall touch on my—my point of exodus, Lisaweta, after thirteen years; and that can become somewhat comic.”

She smiled.

“That is what I wanted to hear, Tonio Kröger. And so, God be with you. And don’t neglect to write me, do you hear? I look forward to a letter rich in experience from your trip to—Denmark. . . .”

VI

And Tonio Kröger travelled north. He travelled with comfort (for he liked to say that anyone who was so much more disturbed internally than other people had a perfect right to a little external com-

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fort) and he never stopped until the towers of the narrow city from which he had come rose up before him into the grey air. There he made a brief strange stop-over. . . .

A melancholy afternoon was already passing into evening when the train pulled into the smoke-filled and wonderfully familiar station; beneath the dirty glass roof the smoke was still gathered in a mass, moving back and forth in long shreds, just as at the time when Tonio Kröger, with nothing but scorn in his heart, had travelled away from here.—He traced his baggage, gave orders to have it taken to the hotel, and left the station.

There stood the city cabs in a row, each black, unusually high and broad, and with its team of horses! He took none of them; he simply looked at them, as he looked at everything: the narrow gables and pointed towers which greeted him above the near-by roofs, the blond and portly people about him with their broad yet rapid manner of speaking—and a nervous laughter arose in him which had some mysterious kinship to a sob. He went on foot, went slowly, the ceaseless pressure of the damp wind in his face, crossed the bridge with its mythological statues standing by the hand-rail, and walked some distance along by the harbour.

Great God, how tiny and remote it all seemed! Had all these narrow gable-lined streets always been so funny in their steep climb toward the town? The smokestacks and masts of the ships tossed lightly on

the melancholy river in the wind and twilight. Should he go up that street, that one there, where the house stood that he had in mind? No, to-morrow. He was so sleepy now. His head was heavy from the trip, and slow clouded thoughts were passing through his mind.

Often during the thirteen years, when his digestion had troubled him, he had dreamed that he was home again in the old echoing house on the steep street, that his father was there too and was hard at him on account of his degenerate manner of living—all of which he had always found quite reasonable. And now this neighbourhood was in no way different from one of those tough, deceiving dream fabrics in which we ask ourselves whether this is delusion or reality, and finally feel compelled to decide definitely for the latter only to awaken in the end. . . . He went through the draughty, almost deserted streets, held his head bent against the wind, and walked like a somnambulist in the direction of the hotel, the first in the city, where he was to pass the night. A bow-legged man, carrying a pole with a little flame at one end, was walking with a rolling sailor's stride in front of him and lighting the gas lamps.

What was the matter with him? What was all this which, beneath the ashes of his weariness, without breaking in a clear flame, glowed so sombrely and painfully? Silent, silent, and no word! No speech! He would gladly have gone on this way for a long while, in the wind through these twilit, dreamily

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familiar streets. But everything huddled so narrow and close; one soon reached his destination.

In the upper city there were arc lamps, and they were already lit. There was the hotel, and those were the two black lions which lay in front of it and which he had been afraid of as a child. They were still looking at each other, with an expression as though they were going to sneeze. But they seemed to be much smaller than formerly. Tonio Kröger entered between them.

Since he came on foot, he was received without much ceremony. He was met by the porter and an elegant gentleman in black who did the honours and was always shooting his cuffs back into his sleeves with his little fingers; they eyed him critically and appraisingly from head to foot, visibly struggling to form some idea of him socially, to place him in the *bourgeois* hierarchy and assign him some notch in their respect. Yet they did not come to any satisfactory conclusion, so that they finally decided on a moderate politeness for him. A waiter, a mild man with whiskers as blond as bread, a swallow-tail coat shiny with age, and rosettes on his noiseless shoes, led him up two flights into a clean, old-fashioned room. Beyond the window, in the twilight, he saw spread out the picturesque and mediæval view of courts, gables, and the bizarre pile of the church near which the hotel was located. Tonio Kröger stood awhile before this window; then

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he sat down with folded arms on the expansive sofa, knitted his brows, and whistled to himself.

A light was brought, and his baggage arrived. At the same time the waiter laid the register on the table, and Tonio Kröger, with his head bent sideways, put down something on it which looked like his name, vocation, and residence. Then he ordered a light supper, and continued looking out into the open from his sofa corner. When his meal stood in front of him, he left it for a while untouched, finally took a few bites, and walked up and down the room for another hour, occasionally stopping and closing his eyes. Then he undressed slowly, and went to bed. He had a long sleep, with confused and strangely wistful dreams.

When he awoke, he saw his room filled with bright daylight. He was bewildered, and thought hurriedly where he was; and he arose to open the curtains. The slightly pale late-summer blue of the sky was streaked with strips of cloud torn by the wind; but the sun was shining on his native city.

He gave even more care to his toilet than usual, washed and shaved himself with extra thoroughness, and made himself as fresh and clean as though he were preparing for a visit to some good, correct house where he was supposed to make a tidy blameless impression. And during the operations of dressing he listened to the anxious beating of his heart.

How bright it was out there! He should have

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felt better if, like yesterday, the streets had lain in twilight. But now he should have to go through the clear sunlight under people's eyes. Would he run across acquaintances, be stopped, questioned, and have to account for how he had spent these thirteen years? No, thank God, no one knew him any longer; and whoever remembered him would not recognize him, for he had really changed a little in the meantime. He observed himself attentively in the mirror, and suddenly he felt safer behind his mask, behind this face of his which showed the signs of early strain and looked older than his years. . . . He had breakfast brought in, and then went out, beneath the deprecatory glances of the porter and the elegant gentleman in black, through the vestibule, and between the two lions, out into the open.

Where was he going? He hardly knew. It was like yesterday. It was not so much that he saw himself surrounded again by this wonderfully dignified and old, familiar juxtaposition of gables, towers, arcades, wells; not so much that he felt again in his face the pressure of the wind, the strong wind which brought with it a sharp delicate fragrance from distant dreams; as that his senses seemed obscured as by a veil, a blanket of fog. . . . The muscles of his face relaxed; and he observed people and things more quietly. Yet perhaps, there on that street corner, he awoke. . . .

Where was he going? He felt as though the direction which he was taking had some connexion with

his melancholy and strangely remorseful dreams of the night. . . . He came to the market, passed under the arches of the town hall where butchers were weighing their wares with bloody hands, out on to the market-place where the Gothic well stood high, complex, and pointed. Then he stopped before a house, a plain narrow house, like many others, with a curved, fretwork gable—and he was lost in the contemplation of it. He read the name-plate on the door, and let his eyes rest for a time on each of the windows. Then he turned slowly to leave.

Where was he going? Home. But he took a roundabout way, went for a walk out beyond the gate, since he had time. He went over the Mill-wall and the Holsten-wall, and held his hat tight from the wind which moaned and whistled in the trees. Then he left the walls near the railroad station, watched a train puffing by in clumsy hastiness, counted the cars for a pastime, and peered after the man who was sitting in the rear of the very last one. And on the Lindenplatz he stopped before one of the pretty villas that stood there, gazed for a long time into the garden and up at the windows; and finally he got the idea of swinging the garden gate back and forth on its hinges, so that it creaked. Then for a time he observed his hand, which was cold and covered with rust, and walked on, walked through the old low gate along the harbour and up the steep windy street to the house of his parents.

It stood, grey and sober as it had been for three

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hundred years, its gable overtowering the neighbouring houses which surrounded it; and Tonio Kröger read the pious aphorism that stood over the entrance in half-obliterated letters. Then he took a deep breath and entered.

His heart beat anxiously, for he almost expected his father, in his office coat and with his pen behind his ear, to come out through one of the doors on the ground floor as he was passing, stop him, and bring him resolutely to account for his extravagant life—which he would have found very reasonable. But he got by unmolested. The storm door was not closed, but only pushed to, and this seemed reprehensible to him; while at the time he felt like in certain light dreams in which the obstacles give way to us of their own accord, and we press forward unhindered, graced by a marvellous well-being. . . . The broad entrance, paved with large rectangular flag-stones, resounded with his steps. Opposite the kitchen, in which all was silent, a scaffolding of ungainly but neatly varnished rafters thrust out from the wall, supporting the servants' quarters above; these could be reached only by a sort of ladder which led up to them from the passage. But the large closets and the carved chest that had stood here were no longer there. . . . The son of the house mounted the heavy stairs, and supported himself with his hand on the white-enamelled, carved wooden banister, while he pulled himself up at each step and on the next let himself sink down again softly, as though

he were testing timidly whether his former intimacy with this old solid hand-rail could be restored. . . . But on the landing he stopped before the entrance to the entresol. On the door a white placard was fastened, on which he could read in black letters: "Public Library."

"Public Library?" Tonio Kröger thought, for he found that neither the public nor literature had any business here. He knocked on the door. . . . He heard a "Come in," and went in its direction. Tense and melancholy, he looked in upon some extremely unsightly alterations.

The floor was three rooms deep, with its connecting doors standing open. The walls were covered almost to the ceiling with uniformly bound books which stood on dark shelves in long rows. In each room an indigent man sat writing behind a kind of counter. Two of them merely turned their heads towards Tonio Kröger, but the first stood up hastily, at the same time supporting himself with both hands on the table-top, shoving his head forward, pursing his lips, raising his brows, and observing the visitor with diligently blinking eyes. . . .

"Pardon," Tonio Kröger said, without turning his eyes from the many books. "I am a foreigner here; I am seeing the sights of the town. So this is the Public Library? Would you permit me to look around a bit at the collection?"

"Gladly!" the official said, and blinked still more violently. . . . "Certainly, that is free to everyone.

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Do you simply want to look around? . . . would you like a catalogue?"

"No, thank you," Tonio Kröger answered. "I can easily find my way." Then he began walking slowly along the walls, while he acted as though he were studying the titles on the books. Finally he took down one volume, opened it, and stepped over to the window with it.

This had been the breakfast room. In the mornings they had breakfasted here, not up there in the large dining-hall where the white forms of gods were stepping out of the blue tapestry. . . . That room there had served as a bedroom. His father's mother had died there, old as she was, amid violent spasms, for she was a pleasure-loving woman of the world and clung to life. And later his father himself had breathed out his last sigh there, the tall, correct, somewhat melancholy and thoughtful gentleman with the wild flower in his buttonhole. . . . Tonio had sat at the foot of his death-bed, with hot eyes, completely and reverently given over to powerful, dumb feelings, to love and pain. And his mother too had knelt by the bed, his beautiful emotional mother, completely lost in hot tears, whereupon she went off into the blue distance with the southern artist. . . . But behind there, the smaller third room, now likewise completely filled with books guarded by an indigent man, had been his for several years. He had returned there after school, after he had taken a walk, as just now; by that wall had stood his table

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where in the drawer he had kept his first intimate and helpless verses. . . . The walnut-tree. . . . A penetrating sadness shot through him. He looked out sideways through the window. The garden lay in ruins, but the old walnut-tree stood in its place, cumbersomely groaning and moaning in the wind. And Tonio Kröger let his eyes slip back to the book which he held in his hands, a prominent work of poetry well known to him. He looked down at these black lines and groups of sentences, followed the skilful flow of the text for a piece, as it ascended in structural passion to a gesture, a touch and effect, and then broke off tellingly.

"Yes, that is well done," he said, put down the work of poetry, and turned away. Then he saw that the official was still standing up and blinking his eyes with a mixed expression of officiousness and cautious distrust.

"An excellent collection, as I see," Tonio Kröger said. "I have already gotten a general idea of it. I am much obliged to you. Good-bye." Then he went out to the door; but it was a questionable exit, and he felt plainly that the official, disturbed over this visit, would stand there blinking for several minutes.

He felt no inclination to penetrate further. He had been home. Above, in the large rooms beyond the pillared hall, strangers were living—he saw that. For the stairs at the top were closed by a glass door which did not use to be there, and there was some

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kind of name-plate on it. He went away, went down the stairs, across the echoing vestibule, and left his paternal house. In a corner of a restaurant, retiring to himself, he took a rich heavy meal, and then returned to the hotel.

"I have finished here," he said to the elegant gentleman in black. "I leave this afternoon." And he asked for his bill, and also for a cab which would bring him to the harbour and the steamer for Copenhagen. Then he went to his room and sat down at the table, sat still and upright, resting his cheek in his hand and looking down at the table-top with sightless eyes. Later he settled his account and got ready his things. At the appointed time the cab was announced, and Tonio Kröger descended ready for the trip.

Below, at the foot of the stairs, the elegant gentleman in black was waiting for him.

"Pardon me!" he said, and shot his cuffs back into his sleeves with his little fingers. "Pardon me, sir, if we have to trouble you for a moment. Herr Seehaase—the proprietor of the hotel—requests a brief word with you. A formality. . . . He is in there. . . . Would you be so kind as to come with me? . . . It is *only* Herr Seehaase, the proprietor of the hotel."

And with gestures of encouragement he led Tonio Kröger to the rear of the lobby. There, indeed, Herr Seehaase was standing. Tonio Kröger knew him at a glance from old times. He was short, fat,

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and bow-legged. His trimmed whiskers had become grey; but he was still wearing a much cut-away dress-coat, and a little knitted green velvet cap to match. Furthermore, he was not alone. Next to him, beside a little writing-shelf fastened to the wall, stood a policeman wearing his helmet. His gloved right hand was resting on a paper with writing in different colours which lay before him on the desk; and he stared back with his noble soldierly face, as though he expected that Tonio Kröger would have to sink through the floor at the sight of him.

Tonio Kröger looked from one to the other, and waited for what might happen.

"You come from Munich?" the policeman finally asked in a well-meaning, lugubrious voice.

Tonio Kröger assented to this.

"You are travelling to Copenhagen?"

"Yes, I am *en route* to a Danish bathing-resort."

"Bathing-resort?—Yes, you must produce your papers," the policeman said, pronouncing the "produce" with peculiar satisfaction.

"Papers . . ." He had no papers. He drew out his portfolio and looked in; except for some paper money, there was nothing inside but the proofs of a short story which he intended revising when he reached his destination. He did not like to deal with officials, and had never yet gotten a passport.

"I am sorry," he said, "but I am carrying no papers with me."

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"So?" the policeman said. "None at all? What is your name?"

Tonio Kröger answered him.

"And is that so?" the policeman asked, straightening up and suddenly extending his nostrils as widely as he could.

"Absolutely so," Tonio Kröger answered.

"What are you, then?"

Tonio Kröger gulped and named his trade with a firm voice. Herr Seehaase raised his head and looked into his face with curiosity.

"Hm!" the policeman said. "And you admit not being identical with an individual by the name of"—he said "individual," and then from the paper with different-coloured writing he spelled out a thoroughly intricate and romantic name which seemed adventurously compounded from the sounds of various races, and which Tonio Kröger had forgotten again the next moment—"Who," he went on, "of unknown parents and uncertain status, is wanted by the Munich police for several fraudulent activities and is probably fleeing to Denmark?"

"I don't merely admit it," Tonio Kröger said, with a nervous movement of his shoulders.—That made a certain impression.

"How? Ah, of course! Why, certainly!" the policeman said. "But simply since you couldn't produce anything!"

Also, Herr Seehaase intervened conciliatingly: "The whole thing is a formality," he said, "nothing

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more! You must consider that the officer is simply doing his duty. If you could prove your identity somehow . . . a paper . . .”

All were silent. Should he end the matter by introducing himself, by disclosing to Herr Seehaase that he was no confidence man of uncertain status, was not by birth a gipsy in the green wagon, but the son of Consul Kröger, from the Kröger family? No, he had no desire to do that. And weren't these burghers somewhat in the right after all? In a way he was quite in sympathy with them. He shrugged his shoulders and remained silent.

“What have you there?” the policeman asked. “There, in the valise?”

“Here? Nothing. It is some proofs,” Tonio Kröger answered.

“Proofs? How is that? Let me see once.”

And Tonio Kröger handed over his work. The policeman spread it out on the desk-top and began reading. Herr Seehaase also stepped nearer and joined in the reading. Tonio Kröger looked over their shoulders and observed at what place they were. It was a good moment, a touch and effect, which he had worked out tellingly. He was content with himself.

“See!” he said. “There stands my name. I wrote this, and now it will be published, you understand.”

“Well, that is enough!” Herr Seehaase said decisively; he collected the pages, folded them, and

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gave them back to him. "That will do, Petersen!" he repeated curtly, shutting his eyes furtively and shaking his head in the negative. "We have no right to detain the gentleman any longer. The cab is waiting. I beg you to forgive the slight inconvenience, sir. The officer simply did his duty, but I told him at the start that he was on the wrong track . . ."

"So?" Tonio Kröger thought.

The policeman did not seem quite agreed. He still put in something about an "individual" and "produce." But amid repeated expressions of regret Herr Seehaase led his guest back through the lobby, accompanied him between the two lions to the cab, and with assurances of respect shut the door behind him himself. And then the ridiculously high and broad cab rolled swaying, clattering, and banging down the steep streets to the harbour.

This was Tonio Kröger's strange stop-over in his native city.

VII

Night came on, and the moon had already risen in a swimming silver reflection, when Tonio Kröger's ship reached the open sea. He was standing by the bowsprit, wrapped in his coat against the wind which was growing stronger and stronger; and he looked down into the dark roaming and driving of the strong smooth undulating masses which worked in among one another, slapping together, shooting apart in un-

expected directions and suddenly lighting up with foam. . . .

He was lulled by a delicious cradling movement. He had been a bit depressed when they had wanted to arrest him as a confidence man in his home town; yes, although he had in a way found it within reason. But then, after boarding the ship, he had watched the loading of the cargo as he used to do with his father during boyhood. The deep hold of the ship was filled, amid cries in a mixture of Danish and Low German. He had seen how, in addition to the bundles and chests, they had also let down in heavily barred cages a polar bear and a royal tiger, which must have come from Hamburg and were destined for a Danish menagerie. And this had distracted him. Then, as the ship was gliding between the even banks of the river, he had entirely forgotten officer Petersen's cross-examination. And everything that had taken place before that—his sweet, melancholy, and remorseful dreams during the night, the walk he had taken, the sight of the walnut-tree—had become uppermost again in his mind. And now, as the sea was opening out, he saw from a distance the beach where, as a boy, he could hear the dreams of the sea in summer; he saw the glow from the lighthouse, and the lights of the Kur-house, where he had lived with his parents. . . . The Baltic Sea! He bowed his head against the strong salt wind which came towards him freely and unimpeded, enveloping his ears and evoking a mild

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vertigo, a faint intoxication: the memory of all evil, of pain and error, of desires and strivings, passed lightly and easily away. And in the swishing, pattering, frothing, and groaning round about him, he seemed to hear the soughing and creaking of the old walnut-tree, the squeaking of a garden gate. . . . It was getting darker and darker.

“The stars, God, jes’ look at the stars!” A voice which seemed to come from the inside of a barrel spoke up suddenly with a sorrowfully chanting intonation. He knew it already. It belonged to a reddish-blond and simply dressed man with red eyelids and the cool damp appearance of a person who had just bathed. At dinner in the saloon he had been Tonio Kröger’s neighbour, and had with timid and retiring movements put away astounding quantities of lobster omelette. Now he was leaning beside him on the railing and looking up at the sky, while he held his chin between thumb and forefinger. Beyond a doubt he was in one of those extraordinary and solemnly meditative moods when the barrier between humans falls away, when the heart opens even to strangers, and the mouth speaks things to which otherwise it would be shyly closed. . . .

“Jes’ look, sir, at the stars. There they stand and twinkle; God knows the whole sky is full, and now I ask you, when we look up and think that many of them must be a hundred times greater than the earth, how do we feel then? We human beings have invented the telegraph and the telephone, and many

other triumphs of modernity; yes, that we have. But when we look up there, then we must realize and understand that after all we are nothing but worms, miserable worms and no more—am I right or wrong, sir? Yes, we are worms!” he answered himself and nodded up at the heavens, humble and contrite.

“Oof!—no, that chap has no literature in his carcass!” Tonio Kröger thought, and immediately he recalled something which he had read recently: the essay of a famous French writer on cosmological and psychological questions; it had been a very fine bit of talk.

He gave the young man something like an answer to his deeply felt observation, and then they continued conversing together, while they leaned on the railing and looked out into the tempestuous, turbulently brilliant evening. It turned out that his travelling companion was a young merchant from Hamburg who was spending his vacation on this pleasure trip. . . .

“‘You ought,’ he said, ‘to take a little trip on the steamer to Copenhagen,’ says I, and here I am, and so far it is very beautiful. But that about the lobster omelette, that was not right, sir; you shall see, for it will be stormy to-night, the captain told me, and with such a troublesome meal in your stomach, that is no joke.” . . .

Tonio Kröger listened to all this engaging nonsense with a feeling of comfort and friendliness.

“Yes,” he said, “people always eat too heavily

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up here. That induces laziness and melancholy."

"Melancholy?" the young man repeated and looked at him disconcertedly. "You must be a foreigner here, sir?" he asked suddenly. . . .

"Oh, yes, I come from quite a distance!" Tonio Kröger answered with a vague parrying movement of his arm.

"But you are right," the young man said. "God knows, you are right in what you say about melancholy! I am nearly always melancholy, but especially on evenings like this, when the sky is full of stars"; and again he supported his chin between his thumb and forefinger.

"He surely writes verses," Tonio Kröger thought; "the deeply, nobly felt verses of a merchant."

The evening was advancing, and the wind had now become so violent that it interfered with their conversation. So they decided to sleep awhile, and they wished each other good night.

Tonio Kröger stretched out on the narrow bed in his cabin, but he found no rest. The strong wind and its pungent smell had strangely aroused him; and his heart was unsteady, as though he were anxiously expecting some new sweet experience. Also he was made acutely sick by the vibration which took place when the ship dropped down the steep hill of a wave and the screw worked convulsively outside the water. He got completely dressed again and came up in the open.

Clouds were racing past the moon. The sea was dancing. No curved and regular waves were advancing in order, but for a great distance, in the pale and flickering light, the sea was lashed into a choppy turmoil; it leaped and sprang up in gigantic pointed flame-like tongues; beside foam-filled chasms it threw out strange jagged forms; and with the strength of enormous arms in mad playfulness it seemed to sling the spray into every wind. The ship was having a hard trip; pounding, tossing, and groaning, it worked its way through the tumult, and often he heard the polar bear and the tiger, who were suffering from the sea voyage, roar from below. A man in an oil-skin coat, the cape over his head and a lantern strapped to his body, crossed back and forth on the fore-deck, balancing himself painfully with his legs wide apart. But then behind, bent low over the rail, the young man from Hamburg was standing, and he was having a sorry time of it. "God," he said with a trembling, hollow voice, as he saw Tonio Kröger, "jes' see once this riot of the elements, sir!" But then he was interrupted and turned away hastily.

Tonio Kröger clung to a taut rope and looked out into this wanton turmoil. A shout pressed up within him, and he seemed as though it would be strong enough to ring out above the storm and the flood; a song to the sea, inspired by love, rang inside him. "Yes, my boyhood's savage friend, you and I are joined again. . . ." But then the poem was

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over. It was not finished, was not well-formed, was not calmly rounded out into something solid. His heart was alive. . . .

He stood this way for a long while. Then he stretched out on a bench outside the cabin and looked up at the sky where the stars were flickering. He even slept a little; and when the cold spray shot into his face, it seemed to him in his half-sleep like a caress.

Vertical chalk cliffs, ghostly in the moonlight, hove into sight and came nearer. That was Möen, the island; and again sleep intervened, broken by showers of the salty spray, which hit sharply into his face and made his features stiffen. . . . When he became fully awake it was already day, a chilly light-grey day, and the green sea was smoother. At breakfast he saw again the young merchant, who blushed deeply, probably through shame at having uttered such poetic and unpresentable things in the darkness; he stroked out his little reddish moustache with all five fingers and called out a militarily sharp "good morning," only to avoid him uneasily from then on.

And Tonio Kröger landed in Denmark. He put up in Copenhagen, and gave tips to everyone who looked as though he expected one. Starting from his hotel room, he wandered around the city for three days while he carried his little traveller's guide open before him, and conducted himself just like any sight-seeing foreigner of the better classes. He observed

the King's New Market and the "Horse" in the centre of it, he looked up respectfully at the columns of the Frue Kirke, he stood a long while before Thorvaldsen's noble and lovely sculptures, he climbed the Round Tower, saw palaces, and spent two lively evenings in the Tivoli. But this was not all that he saw.

On the houses (they often looked much like the old houses of his native city with the curving fret-work gables) he saw names which were known to him from the old days, seeming to stand for something tender and precious, and always containing something like a reproach, a complaint, a hankering after what was lost. And everywhere, while he breathed in the damp sea air in slow deliberate draughts, he saw eyes as blue, hair as blond, faces of the same form and nature as those he had observed in the strangely troubled and remorseful dreams of the night he spent in his native city. It was possible for some glance on the open street, some ringing word, some burst of laughter to touch him to the quick.

He could not stand it for long in the cheerful city. He was affected by an unrest, sweet and fond, half reminiscence and half expectancy; and along with this came a yearning to be lying quietly somewhere on the beach, free from the necessity of playing the diligently inquisitive tourist. So he boarded another ship, and one dismal day (the sea had turned black) he was sailing northwards along the coast of

Seeland toward Helsingör. From here he continued his journey immediately by cab along the boulevard for three-quarters of an hour, always a little above the sea, until he stopped at his real and ultimate destination: a little white beach hotel with the green shutters, standing in the middle of a colony of squat houses, and with its wood-covered tower looking out over the sand and towards the Swedish coast. Here he alighted, took possession of the bright room which was being held in readiness for him, distributed all his belongings, and prepared to live here for a while.

VIII

It was already well on into September. There were no longer many guests in Aalsgaard. At meal-times in the large, heavy-beamed dining-hall on the ground floor, with its high windows facing the glass veranda and the sea, the proprietress sat at the head of the table. An elderly spinster with white hair, colourless eyes, pinkish cheeks, and an unsteady twittering voice, she was always careful to arrange her red hands to advantage on the tablecloth. There was also a short-necked old gentleman with a steel-grey seaman's beard and purplish face; he was a fish dealer from the capital, and could speak German. He seemed all choked up and apoplectic, for he breathed in short irregular gasps, and from time to time raised his ringed forefinger to one of his nostrils in order to press it shut and get a

little air through the other by blowing violently. Nevertheless he was continually speaking to the bottle of liquor which stood before him at breakfast as well as at dinner and supper. Then too, there were three tall American boys with their guardian or tutor, who adjusted his spectacles in silence and played football with the boys all day. They wore their reddish-yellow hair parted in the middle, and had long motionless faces. "Please give me the *Wurst* things there," the one said. "That's not *Wurst*, that's *Schinken*," said another; and this was all that either they or the tutor contributed to the conversation. For otherwise they sat there quietly drinking hot water.

Tonio Kröger could not have wished for different table companions. He enjoyed his peace, listened to the Danish gutturals, the sharp and melancholy vowels, in which the fish dealer and the proprietress conversed at times; occasionally he exchanged a brief word with the former over the state of the barometer; then he would rise and pass through the veranda to the beach, where he had already spent long morning hours.

Often it was quiet and summer-like there. The sea lay smooth and inactive, in blue, bottle-green, and pinkish stripes, with silverish glittering reflections of light playing over it. The seaweed was drying into hay in the sunlight, and the jelly-fish were evaporating where they lay. It smelled somewhat foul and also somewhat of the tar of the fishing-smack against

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which Tonio Kröger was leaning as he sat on the sand, turned so that he faced the open horizon and not the Swedish coast. But the soft sea breeze blew fresh and clean across everything.

And grey stormy days came. The waves bent their heads like steers setting their horns to strike, and ran raging against the banks of sand, which were covered with wet glistening seaweed, mussels, and washed-up bits of wood. Between the tenuous wave-hills, the valleys stretched out pale green and foamy beneath the low sky; but there, where the sun stood behind the clouds, a white velvet sheen lay on the water.

Tonio Kröger stood in the wind and noise, sunk in this heavy, drugging tumult which he loved so well. If he turned and walked away, everything around him suddenly seemed quiet and warm. But he knew that behind him was the sea; it called, allured, and greeted him. And he smiled.

He went towards the interior, on meadow paths through the solitude, and soon he was swallowed up in the beach woods which stretched far out over the neighbouring hills. He sat down on the moss, leaning against a tree in such a way that he could see a strip of the sea between the trunks. At times the wind carried to him the sound of the surf, which rang out as though boards were falling upon one another in the distance. The crows cawed above the tree-tops, hoarse, desolate, and forlorn. . . . He held a book on his knees, but he did not read a line in it.

He was enjoying a profound forgetfulness, an untrammelled soaring beyond space and time; and only now and then it seemed as though his heart would be shot through with misery, a brief, piercing sensation of melancholy or remorse which he was too far sunk in indolence to examine for its name and origin.

So passed many a day, he could not have said how many, and he had no desire to know. But there came one on which something happened; it happened while the sun was standing in the sky and people were present, and Tonio Kröger was not so unusually astonished by it.

This day also began with delightful splendour. Tonio Kröger awakened very early and quite suddenly, leaped from his sleep with a faint and indeterminate terror, and thought that he was looking at a miracle, a magic, fairylike illumination. His room, with glass door and balcony fronting on the sound, and divided into living and sleeping-quarters by a thin white gauze curtain, was hung with pale-coloured wall-paper, and provided with light, cheery furniture, so that it always had a bright and friendly look. But now his eyes, heavy with sleep, saw everything lying before him in an unearthly clarity and illumination, all bathed in an unutterably delicate and vaporous rose hue which gilded the walls and furniture and gave the gauze curtain a mild red glow. . . . For a long while Tonio Kröger did not understand what was taking place. But as he stood before the

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glass door and looked out, he saw that it was the rising sun.

For several days it had been dull and rainy; but now the sky stretched out over the sea and the land, as clear and luminous as taut light-blue silk. Interlaced and bordered by clouds lit up with red and gold, the disk of the sun rose solemnly above the sparkling ruffled ocean, which seemed to tremble and glow beneath it. . . . So the day came on; and, confused and happy, Tonio Kröger jumped into his clothes, breakfasted before all the others below on the veranda, afterwards swam out a ways in the sound from the little wooden bathing-house, and then took an hour's walk along the beach. As he returned, several omnibus-like wagons were standing in front of the hotel; and from the dining-room he observed, both in the adjoining reception room where the piano stood, and also on the veranda and on the terrace in front of it, numerous people of both sexes, in ordinary middle-class dress. They were in lively conversation, and were sitting at round tables enjoying beer and sandwiches. There were whole families, elderly people and young people, and even a few children.

At the second breakfast (the table was heavily laden with cold foods, smoked, salted, and baked) Tonio Kröger inquired what was going on.

"Guests!" said the fish dealer. "Excursionists from Helsingör who have come here for a ball! Yes, God help us, we won't be able to sleep this night!"

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There will be dancing, dancing and music, and I am afraid it will keep up for a long while. It is a family gathering, a reunion and trip to the country combined—in short, a subscription ball or something of the sort; and they will be happy as the day is long. They came by boat and by carriage, and now they are having breakfast. After a while they will go further into the country, but in the evening they will come back, and then there will be a dance in the hall here. Yes, damn it all, we won't sleep a wink . . .”

“That will be pleasant for a change,” Tonio Kröger said.

After this, nothing further was said for quite a while. The proprietress arranged her red fingers, the fish dealer blew through his right nostril in order to get a little air, and the Americans drank hot water and made long faces.

Then of a sudden this happened: *Hans Hansen and Ingeborg Holm passed through the room.*

Tonio Kröger, pleasantly tired after his bath and his fast walk, was leaning back in his chair eating smoked salmon on toast—he sat facing the veranda and the sea. And suddenly the door opened, and the two came in, hand in hand—sauntering, and without haste. Ingeborg, blonde Inge, was dressed in bright colours, as she used to be at Herr Knaak's dancing-class. The soft flowery dress reached down to her ankles, and about her shoulders she wore a broad white *v*-shaped fichu which left her soft pliant

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neck exposed. Her hat was hanging on her arm by its knotted ribbons. She was perhaps just a little taller than before, and now wore her wonderful plait done up on her head.

But Hans Hansen was just the same as ever. He had on his reefer's jacket with the gilt buttons, with the broad blue collar lying over it on his back and shoulders. The sailor cap with the short ribbons he held in his loose hand, and was swinging it carelessly back and forth. Ingeborg kept her narrow eyes turned away, perhaps a little embarrassed by the stare of the diners. But Hans Hansen now turned his head straight towards the breakfast table with utter defiance, and his steel-blue eyes measured one person after the other challengingly and with a certain amount of scorn. He even let Ingeborg's hand go and swung his cap still more briskly back and forth, in order to show just what sort of man he was. So the two of them, with the quiet blue sea as a background, passed before Tonio Kröger's eyes, went the length of the room, and disappeared through the far door into the music room.

This happened at eleven-thirty in the morning; and while the guests at the Kurhouse were still sitting at breakfast, the company in the adjoining room and on the veranda broke up and left the hotel through the near-by side entrance without anyone's coming through the dining-hall. They could be heard outside climbing into the wagons amid jokes and laughter; and one vehicle after the other started

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gratingly along the boulevard and rolled away. . . .

"So they are coming back?" Tonio Kröger asked. . . .

"That they are!" said the fish dealer, "and God have mercy. They have arranged for music, you know, and I sleep here above this room."

"That will be pleasant for a change," Tonio Kröger repeated. Then he arose and left.

He spent the day as he spent the others, on the beach, in the woods; held a book on his knees and blinked into the sun. He had only one thought: that they would return and hold a dance in the hall as the fish dealer had promised; and he simply felt happy at this, with a sweet uneasy happiness such as he had not experienced for long dead years. Once, through some association of ideas, he recalled fleetingly a distant acquaintance, Adalbet, the short-story writer, who knew what he wanted and had gone to the café to escape the spring air. And he shrugged his shoulders at him. . . .

Dinner was eaten earlier than usual; and supper likewise they took sooner than ever before, in the music room, since in the hall preparations for the ball were already under way: everything had been plunged into such glorious disorder. Then, when it was dark and Tonio Kröger was sitting in his room, things became lively again on the boulevard and in the house. The excursionists were returning. In fact, from the direction of Helsingör new guests were arriving on bicycles and in wagons; and already he

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could hear a violin tuning up in the house downstairs, and a clarinet was nasally executing some trial runs. . . . All indications were that it would be a brilliant ball.

Now the little orchestra struck up a march; it carried up to him in a subdued steady rhythm; they were opening the dance with a polonaise. Tonio Kröger sat still for quite a while and listened. But when he heard the march tempo change into a waltz rhythm, he arose and slipped noiselessly out of his room.

From the corridor he could go down the back stairs to the side entrance of the hotel, and from there, without touching a room, reach the glass veranda. He took this route, quietly and stealthily, as though he were on forbidden paths; he felt his way carefully through the darkness, irresistibly drawn by this stupid and soulfully swaying music, whose tones already came to him clear and unsubdued.

The veranda was empty and unlighted, but the glass door was open into the hall, where the two large petroleum lamps with polished reflectors were shining brightly. He crept up softly; his skin tingled with thievish delight as he dared to stand here in the darkness and to spy unseen on her dancing in the light. Hastily and greedily he sent his glances after the two he was seeking. . . .

The general merriment seemed to have developed with perfect freedom, although the festivity had been

opened hardly half an hour before. But they had already come here warm and excited, after having spent the whole day together, carefree, happy, and in perfect accord. In the music room, which Tonio Kröger could see into if he ventured a little closer, several elderly gentlemen had gathered at cards, smoking and drinking. But others, with their wives, were sitting in the foreground, on the plush chairs and against the walls of the hall, watching the dance. They spread their knees, and supported their hands on them, and puffed out their cheeks with an expression of well-being, while the mothers, wearing bonnets, their hands crossed beneath their breasts, and their heads bent sideways, were looking into the swarm of young people. . . . A podium had been erected against one of the longer walls of the room, and there the musicians were doing their best. There was even a trumpet here; it blew with a certain cautious hesitancy, as though it were afraid of its own voice, which nevertheless was continually breaking down and tumbling all over itself. . . . The couples undulated, weaving in and out among one another, while others wandered about the room arm-in-arm. No one was dressed for a ball, but only as for some Sunday spent in the country during the summer: the cavaliers in ordinary suits which showed signs of having been spared throughout the week, and the young girls in light and cheerful dresses with bouquets of wild flowers on their bodices. Also a few children were in the room and danced with one

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another after their fashion, even when the music stopped. A long-legged man in a swallow-tailed coat, a provincial lion with eye-glass and singed hair, a postal assistant or something of the sort, and like some fat comic figure out of a Danish novel, seemed to be master of ceremonies and head of the ball. Hurried, sweating, and with his whole soul in the matter, he was everywhere at once, waddling through the room in high importance, stepping forward artistically on the tips of his toes and intricately crossing his feet, which were encased in smooth pointed military boots. He swung his arms in the air, gave orders, called for music, clapped his hands. And through it all, the ribbons of the large variegated bow, which was fastened to his shoulder as a mark of his dignity and towards which he often turned his head lovingly, fluttered irregularly behind him.

Yes, they were there, the two who had passed by Tonio Kröger to-day in the sunlight; he saw them again, and gasped with pleasure as he caught sight of them both almost simultaneously. Here was Hans Hansen standing quite near him, close by the door. Bent forward a little, with his legs spread, he was carefully eating a large piece of sponge-cake, while holding his open hand beneath his chin to catch the crumbs. And there against the wall sat Ingeborg Holm, blonde Inge, and the assistant was just now waddling up to them, to invite them to the dance by a *recherché* bow, whereupon he placed one hand on his back and shoved the other gracefully into his

bosom; but she shook her head, and made a sign that she was out of breath and would have to rest a little. Then the assistant took a seat next to her.

Tonio Kröger watched them, these two for whom he had suffered love in times past—Hans and Ingeborg. They were not this so much by reason of specific attributes and similarity of dress, as through the identity of race and type, this light, steel-blue-eyed, and blonde-haired sort which created an impression of purity, of serene good nature, and of a modesty at once proud and homely. He looked at them; saw Hans Hansen standing there in his sailor suit as smart and well-formed as ever, broad in the shoulders and small in the hips; saw how Ingeborg laughingly tossed her head to one side with a kind of insolence, how she had a way of touching the back of her head with a not especially slender, not especially delicate girlish hand, so that the light sleeve slipped back from her elbow—and suddenly he was seized with such a painful melancholy that he retired unwittingly into the darkness so that no one might observe the twitching of his face.

“Had I forgotten you?” he asked “No, never! Not you, Hans; nor you, blonde Inge! It was really you I was working for; and if I heard applause, I looked stealthily around me to see whether you had joined in it. . . . Have you read ‘Don Carlos’ by now, Hans Hansen, as you promised me by your garden gate? Don’t do it! I don’t require it of you any more. What do you care about the king who

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cries because he is lonesome? You shall not make your bright eyes sad and dreamy from dwelling on verses and melancholy. . . . To be like you! To begin again, grow up like you; be upright, cheerful, and simple; regular, orderly, and on easy terms with God and the world, to be loved by the harmless and the happy, to take you for a wife, Ingeborg Holm, and have a son like you, Hans Hansen—to live free from the curse of knowledge and the pains of creation, to love and praise in blessed mediocrity! . . . Begin again! But it would do no good. Everything would turn out again as it did before. For often people go astray because there simply is no right path for them.”

Now the music was silent; there was a pause, and refreshments were handed around. The assistant in person hurried about among the ladies, serving them from a tray of herring salad. But before Ingeborg Holm he even dropped on one knee as he held out the dish to her, and she blushed with pleasure at this.

Yet by now the people in the hall were beginning to notice the onlooker beyond the glass door; and distant, inquisitive glances from pretty, heated faces were directed towards him. But he held his ground regardless. Also, the eyes of Ingeborg and Hans brushed past him almost at the same moment, with that total indifference which almost has the appearance of disdain. Yet suddenly he became aware that someone's gaze was penetrating to him and resting upon him. He turned his head, and his eyes

immediately encountered those which he had felt were glued upon him. Not far from him a girl whom he had noticed before, with a pale, narrow, and delicate face, was standing. She had not danced much; the cavaliers had not been especially concerned about her; and he had seen her sitting against the wall with firmly compressed lips. She was now standing alone again. She was dressed in bright fragrant garments like the others, but beneath the transparent stuff of her dress her exposed shoulders gleamed frail and angular, and the lean neck was set so deep between the paltry shoulders that the quiet girl seemed almost a bit deformed. She held her hands, which were covered with short flimsy gloves, over her flat breast in such a way that the fingertips met gently. With bowed head, she was looking up at Tonio Kröger through black, swimming eyes. He turned away. . . .

Here, quite near him, Hans and Ingeborg were sitting. He had taken a seat next to this girl who might have been his sister; and, surrounded by other red-cheeked children of mankind, they were eating and drinking, chatting and enjoying themselves, bantering back and forth at one another with ringing voices, and laughing brightly into the air. Could he not approach them a little? Make whatever jovial remark might occur to him, something at least which they would have to answer with a smile? It would make him happy; he yearned to do it; he would then return more contentedly to his room,

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with the knowledge that he had restored some slight common bond with the two of them. He thought out what he could say, but he did not master the courage to say it. Then too, things must surely be the same as before: they would not understand him, would listen distantly to what he could say to them. For their language was not his language.

Now the dance seemed about to begin again. The assistant developed an all-embracing activity. He hustled about urging everyone to take partners, cleared away chairs and glasses with the help of the waiter, distributed instructions among the musicians, and, grasping the shoulders of clumsy people here and there who didn't know what to do with themselves, he steered them along in front of him. What was going to be done next? Four by four, pairs were forming into *carrés*. . . . A terrible recollection made Tonio Kröger blush. They were to dance the quadrille.

The music struck up, and the pairs came together bowing. The assistant gave the command; he gave the command, by God, in French, and he pronounced the nasal sounds in an incomparably distinguished manner. Ingeborg Holm was dancing close by Tonio Kröger, in the *carré* stationed immediately in front of the glass door. She moved here and there, back and forth, stepping and turning. Often he caught a fragrance which came from her hair or from the delicate stuff of her dress; and he closed his eyes with an emotion which had been so well known

to him from of old; all throughout these recent days he had caught faintly its aroma and acrid charm, and now again it filled him with its sweet oppressiveness. Just what was it? Yearning? Tenderness? Envy, self-contempt? . . . *Moulinet des dames!* Did you laugh, blonde Inge, did you laugh at me, when I danced the *moulinet* and made such a pitiable ass of myself? And would you laugh again to-day too, now that I have become something like a famous man? Yes, that you would; and you would be more than right about it! And if I, I all alone, had produced the nine symphonies, "The World as Will and Idea," and the "Last Judgment"—you would have an eternal right to laugh. . . . He looked at her, and he recalled a line of verse which he had not thought of for a long time and yet which had been so close and familiar to him! "I'd like to sleep, but you must dance." He knew it so well, the melancholically Nordic, profoundly awkward unwillfulness of the emotions which spoke through it. Sleep. . . . To yearn that one might dare surrender simply and wholly to emotions which rest sweetly and indolently within themselves without becoming obligations to act and dance—and yet be forced to dance, to execute nimbly and alertly the trying, trying and precarious knife-dance of art, without ever quite forgetting the humiliating anomaly of this having to dance while one loved. . . .

Suddenly everything dropped into a wild and boisterous movement. The *carrés* had broken up; and

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everyone pushed about, leaping and sliding: the quadrille was being ended with a gallop. The couples flew past Tonio Kröger to the mad double-quick beat of the music, with short, breathless laughter, chasséing, overtaking one another. One couple came up, carried along by the general chase, circling, and racing forward. The girl had a pale, delicate face, and thin, overly high shoulders. And suddenly, close in front of him, someone tripped, slipped, and tumbled. . . . The pale girl had fallen down. She fell so hard and violently that it almost looked dangerous—and the cavalier along with her. He must have hurt himself so rudely that he quite forgot his partner; half raising himself, he began grimacing and rubbing his knees with his hands. And the girl, apparently completely dazed by the fall, was still lying on the floor. Then Tonio Kröger stepped forward, grasped her gently by the arms, and lifted her up. Worn out, confused, and unhappy, she looked up at him; and suddenly her delicate face coloured a dull red.

"Tak, O, mange Tak!" she said, and peered up at him with dark, swimming eyes.

"You should not dance any more, Fräulein," he said softly. Then he looked around him once more in search of *them*, of Hans and Ingeborg, and went away, left the veranda and the hall, and went up to his room.

He was excited by this festival in which he had taken no part; he was tired out with envy. Like

in the past—it had been just like in the past! Hot-faced, he had stood in a dark place in pain over such folk as you, all you blond, vivacious, and happy people; and then had gone off to himself. Someone must come now! Now Ingeborg must come, must notice that he was gone, must follow him stealthily, lay her hand on his shoulder, and say: “Come in with us! Be happy! I love you!” . . . But she did not come at all. Such things never happened. Yes, it was like then, and he was happy as he had been then. For his heart was alive. But what had taken place in the meanwhile, between then and now?—Torpor, desolation, ice, and intellect! And art! . . .

He undressed, lay down to rest, put out the light. He whispered two names into the pillows: these few chaste Nordic syllables which for him meant his true and original mode of love, suffering, and happiness, the deep simple feelings, the home. He looked back over the years between that time and the present. He recalled the arid adventures of sense, nerves, and thought which he had lived through; he saw himself corroded by irony and intellect, devastated and crippled by knowledge, half exhausted by the fevers and chills of creation, bandied about aimlessly, with qualms of conscience, between two crass extremes, between sanctimony and passion, over-refined, impoverished, wearied by cold and choicely æsthetic exaltations, led astray, laid waste, tormented, sick—and he sobbed with regret and melancholy.

It was quiet and dark around him. But from

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below, subdued and undulating, life's sweet trivial waltz-rhythm came up to him.

IX

Tonio Kröger was sitting in the north writing to Lisaweta Iwanowna, his friend, as he had promised.

"Dear Lisaweta, down there in Arcadia, where I shall soon return," he wrote. "This is something in the nature of a letter, but it will disappoint you, for I intend to keep it somewhat general. Not that I have so little to say, or that I haven't experienced one thing or another after my fashion. At home, in my native city, they even wanted to arrest me. . . but of that you shall hear by word of mouth. Often I have days now when I prefer to say something formal and general, instead of telling stories.

"Do you still know, Lisaweta, that you once called me a *bourgeois*, a strayed *bourgeois*? You called me that at a time when, led on by other confessions which I had let out previously, I confessed my love for what I called life. And I wonder whether you really knew how close that came to the truth, how much similarity there is between my *bourgeois* nature and my love of life. This trip has given me occasion to think over that.

"My father, you know, was a Nordic temperament; thoughtful, thorough, puritanically correct, and inclined to melancholy; my mother, of indeterminate exotic blood, beautiful, emotional, naïve, at once

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indolent and passionate, and of an impulsive negligence! Beyond all doubt this was a mixture which contained extraordinary possibilities—and extraordinary dangers. The result was this: a *bourgeois* who strayed into art, a Bohemian who yearns for the nursery, an artist with a bad conscience. For it is certainly my *bourgeois* conscience which permits me to see something profoundly unsteady, ambiguous, profoundly obnoxious, profoundly questionable in everything artistic, everything unusual, everything with genius; and which fills me with this fond weakness for the simple and good-hearted and comfortably normal, for respectability and the absence of genius.

"I stand between two worlds; I am not at home in either of them, and consequently I find things a bit different. You artists call me a *bourgeois*, and the *bourgeois* are tempted to arrest me. . . . I do not know which of the two distress me more bitterly. The *bourgeois* are stupid; but you devotees of beauty who characterize me as phlegmatic and without longing should consider that there is a kind of artistry so deep, so thorough and unescapable, that no longing seems sweeter to it or more desirable than the longing for the bliss of mediocrity.

"I admire the proud and the cold who adventure on the paths of the great demonic beauty, and scorn 'man'—but I do not envy them. For if anything is capable of making a poet out of a literary man, then it is this *bourgeois* love of mine for the human, the vivacious, and the ordinary. All warmth, all

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kindness, all humour derive from this; and it almost seems to me as though it were that very love of which it is written: One can talk with the tongues of men and angels, and yet words without this love would be a mere resounding brass, a ringing shell.

“What I have done is a trifle, not much, as good as nothing. I will do better, Lisaweta; that is a promise. As I write, the sound of the sea reaches me, and I close my eyes. I look into an unborn and capricious world that wants ordering and shaping; I see the confused shadows of human forms signalling me to call them up and release them: tragic ones, and ridiculous ones, and some that are both at once—and to these I am very attached. But my deepest and most secret love belongs to the blond and the blue-eyed, the keenly vivacious, the happy, the amicable, and the ordinary.

“Do not find fault with this love, Lisaweta; it is good and fruitful. There is longing in it, and brooding envy, and just a little disdain, and a very shy happiness.”

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